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Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

J. R. CAMPBELL DELUSIONS ABOUT DONOVAN

BRIAN SIMON MARXISM AND EDUCATION

DOCUMENTS ON THE CZECHOSLOVAK
SITUATION

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CONTENTS

	page
Editorial Comments	257
J. R. CAMPBELL The Movement and the Commission: Delusions about Donovan	264
Brian SIMON Marxism and Education ...	273
Documents on the Czechoslovak Situation ...	283

AMONG ARTICLES IN OCTOBER AND FORTHCOMING ISSUES

Bert RAMELSON	Workers Control
Jack WODDIS	The Thoughts of Ho Chi-Minh
James KLUGMANN	Strategy of British Revolution
James HARVEY	Fulton Commission Report
William MENNELL	Gold and Inflation
Martin JACQUES	Development of State Monopoly Capitalism in Britain, 1900-1939
G. LEWIN	Recent Discussion on the Asiatic Mode of Production
Lucien SEVE	Contradiction, Antagonism, Explosion
R. & E. FROW	Educating Marxists
John FOSTER	Revolutionaries in Oldham
Peter WYNOLL	International Working Men's Association in Nottingham 1871-73
Ken BIGGS	Coventry and the Shop Stewards Movement, 1917
Barrie STACEY	William Morris on Work

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Editorial Comments

DELEGATES to this month's TUC will find it profitable to glance at the Third General Report of the Prices and Incomes Board issued last July, for it raises a number of questions which the Congress and its affiliated unions must face.

The first question might be described as the transformation of incomes policy in the lifetime of the Labour Government. According to the Board, and who should know better, there have been two types of incomes policy.

The first type according to the report was pursued by Governments between 1963 and 1966, and is described by the report as follows:

"A country can pursue a high rate of economic growth and/or a high level of employment in the hope that any adverse short-term effect on the balance of payments with other countries might eventually be offset by the effects of increasing productivity."

That was clearly the policy which the Labour government pursued up to 1966. It was the policy defended at scores of trade union conferences and at almost every trade union school. Although this policy has been abandoned for two whole years, it still appears to be taught at the trade union schools, and the basic assumptions of this policy were the basis of last year's TUC Economic Review.

The second type of policy, as developed after July 1966, is thus described by the PIB:

"The short-term impact on the balance of payments may, however, operate as an insurmountable constraint, in which case concentration will be switched to achieving a favourable balance of payments with other countries, regardless, at any rate up to a point, of the detrimental effects on the internal rate of economic growth and on unemployment."

Everyone who talks about incomes policy in 1968 should be perfectly clear that this—and not the 1963-66 model—is what the government is actually doing at the present moment. As a result of this the trend of unemployment is upward. Until Britain's balance of payments achieves a surplus and remains at a surplus for several years, there will be no attempt at reversal of this unemployment-creating policy as far as the government is concerned. So the TUC is confronted with the choice of tolerating this policy, while making verbal criticisms of it, or really fighting against it.

Sparks in the Dark

Some people have not noticed this drastic change of government policy. The Electrical Trades Union, for example, has a resolution which calls on Congress "to reaffirm its support for a prices and incomes policy as an integral part of planned economic growth, based on increased investment and a greater degree of technological development." This is simply a reaffirmation of the policy abandoned by the government in the July measures of 1966 and in the post-devaluation measures of 1967-1968. Has nobody told the ETU that the prime arm of the government since 1966, as the Prices and Incomes Board has expressed it, is that "concentration has been switched to achieving a favourable balance of payments with other countries regardless, up to a point, of the detrimental effects on the internal rate of economic growth and on employment" (page 3, PIB Report).

The ETU has made another discovery which at least is highly amusing:

"However, Congress considers that the General Council is not the appropriate body to implement an incomes policy any more than the Confederation of British Industry is the appropriate body to implement a prices policy and the principle of an outside independent body to implement both a prices and incomes policy should be accepted."

In other words Long Live the National Board for Prices and Incomes.

Long-Term Setback

Incidentally the Prices and Incomes Board makes an estimation of the long-term effect of incomes policy and devaluation which must be taken into account.

"The effect of devaluation was to add to the total debt owed by the country to others, since the debt had now to be repaid in pounds of lowered value, and to change the composition of the debt in the sense that it now comprised a larger proportion of short-term obligations owed to four external (i.e. foreign) central banks. *The fact of an increase in the country's debt to others makes it necessary to set aside a larger proportion of current output than would otherwise be necessary to repay the debt; this*

repayment must essentially take the form of a higher level of exports in relation to imports than has been the case over the past decade" (italics ours).

There has hardly ever been a more disastrous policy operated in this country than the Maudling, Wilson, Brown policy of economic expansion (under the monopoly capitalist system) plus incomes policy. It not only completely failed to achieve results but its outcome was to inflict a definite setback to the whole British economy. Without the Wilson-Maudling-Brown policy this setback would have most likely occurred at a later period but the government policy brought it on earlier than it need have.

Yet none of those who contributed to this disaster—the Labour Cabinet, the right-wing majority of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, the “lefts” who thought up arguments for supporting incomes policy with slight modifications, are prepared to acknowledge their mistakes.

From the point of view of those who want a genuine left policy, the situation created by devaluation will require arms cuts of an infinitely greater character than hitherto envisaged if the British economy is to be relieved of intolerable burdens.

Rural Counsellors in Cuba

An interesting experiment in democracy and the development of cadres is described in a recent issue of *Gramma* by Orlando Fundora, Head of the Commission of Revolutionary Orientation of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party. This is the organisation of groups of “rural counsellors” for work in remote areas of the island.

Such groups were first organised by César Escalante. They were “militants who worked in direct, every-day, close contact with the people in the countryside.”

Now they are adopting new methods of work. Fundora writes:

“The new conception is in accord with one of the fundamental rules of guerrilla warfare: to assemble the largest number of forces in a single place in order to fight the enemy, which is in this case the ideological enemy.”

A rural zone is selected for its problems—maybe past neglect, or political problems or remoteness. The experiment is being carried out at the moment at Tamarindo in Camagüey Province and at Penasco, in the San Juan de las Yeras Municipality. Counsellors, before going to a particular locality contact the relevant Provincial Party organisation to get acquainted with the general problems of the area.

What exactly is the field of work of the rural counsellors? Orlando Fundora explains:

“A rural counsellor is, above all, a means of communication for the Revolution, a means of finding out all the problems affecting remote places where communication is difficult. This means channelling information from the town to the upper echelons. The Revolution must be informed of both the small and the large problems. It has been proved in practice that there are problems which the municipality cannot solve, while the region can; at times the region cannot do anything, while the provincial board can . . . yet these problems may have an adverse effect on production and the people's conscientiousness, state of mind and attitude.”

The counsellors, he writes, must not just try to locate and report particular problems, nor appear just as speech-makers:

“Once the counsellor is established in the zone he will proceed to join in the work being done there by the farmers, labouring with them in the field, whether this involves working on sugar cane, tobacco or vegetable crops. It would be very difficult for a farmer to respect and listen to an individual who, in his opinion, just walks around and talks.”

Scandinavian Social Democracy

An extremely interesting article on reformism by two Russian historians, G. Diligenski and I. Undassinov, was published in the Soviet journal *World Economics and International Relations* earlier this year.¹ They give a good picture of the influence of social democracy and Social Democratic Parties in the world today, but also discuss the reasons for this influence, how far its bases have been undermined in recent years, and the possibility for united action of revolutionary and reformist workers, whilst the struggle against reformist ideas continues. We will try to publish the article, or at least part of it, in a later issue of *Marxism Today*, for it is interesting to study all possible views on a problem which concerns us in Britain so much.

But for the moment we just wanted to take from this article, as background to our next note on Sweden, the author's figures on the extent of social democratic influence in Scandinavia.

The most influential Party in Scandinavia, they consider, is the Swedish Social-Democratic Party with around 880,000 members. At the 1964 elections it received about 2 million votes (47.3 per cent), and once again formed the Government. But in the local elections of 1966 the same Party received only 42.3 per cent of the votes, less than at any election since 1934.

¹ *Reformism and the Working Class* by Diligenski and Undassinov in *Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya*, No. 5, 1968. A German translation, slightly abbreviated, was published in the GDR journal *Aus der internationalen Arbeiterbewegung*, Nos. 13 and 14, 1968.

A significant defeat was suffered by the Danish Social Democratic Party (which has 260,000 members) at the elections held at the beginning of 1968.

The Norwegian Workers' Party (with 180,000 members) has been the government party for over 30 years. But in the *Storting* elections of 1965 they lost 3.1 per cent of the votes compared with 1961 and the Government was formed by a bloc of bourgeois parties.

This general trend in the Scandinavian countries for the workers, even if slowly, to turn away from the traditional Social Democratic Parties is extremely important, and makes the forthcoming Swedish elections all the more significant.

The Swedish Alternative

Six parties will participate in the Swedish General Election this autumn, and of these, only one Party, the Left Party-Communists, seeks the abolition of the capitalist system. The Left Party is trying to unite all genuine Swedish socialists in preparation for the elections.

Long experience has shown that traditional reformist policies only lead to the maintenance of capitalism.

C. H. Hermansson, Chairman of the Left Party-Communists, writes, criticising the Swedish Social Democratic Party:

"The fundamental policy followed by the Social Democrats in governing Sweden was, and still is, collaboration with big finance capital. The official Social-Democratic ideal is a so-called mixed economy, which they think already exists in Sweden. . . . We, however, describe such a social system as capitalist. To imagine that the ideal of the labour movement could materialise within this system is an illusion."

Life and experience, explains Hermansson have disproved the reformist promises that the problems of unemployment and recurring crises were gone for ever, solved by social democracy.

In fact, there is in Sweden today considerable unemployment; the gap between rich and poor is widening; the distribution of incomes is more uneven than ten years ago. Even the government's "Concentration Commission" has had to admit that economic power in Sweden is concentrated in the hands of 15 big capitalist families, and the big commercial banks that are linked with them. Why do these and other grave social and economic problems still exist, asks Hermansson, and replies:

"These problems exist because economic power after 35 years of Social-Democratic rule is still largely exercised by private proprietors, by big capitalists. They exist because political power, too, is wielded mainly by the big capitalists and the

bourgeoisie. . . . Our aim is to have all power transferred to wage labour, to the trade union movement, the consumers, the tenants—in short, to the people.

In preparation for the forthcoming General Election the Left Party will work out an election programme in consultation with other sections of the socialist Left. The details are not yet elaborated, but the programme is likely to contain demands for 100 per cent employment; the right to work; planned economy controlled by wage labour; a minimum wage and increased wages; an end to price and rent increases; a democratic taxation policy; equal right to work and pay for women and men; reduction of arms expenditure; support for the national and social emancipation movement of all peoples; solidarity with the people of Vietnam; stop all US bombing and get the Americans out of Vietnam.

Victory at the elections wrote Hermansson, already in May, "cannot be forged in a few tense weeks,"² and the Socialist Left must put forward their alternative in action as well as explanation:

"There is need for a policy that will arouse enthusiasm and inspire faith in the future. The Socialist Left *has* such a policy."

Race Relations Act

Now that the new Race Relations Bill has become law it will soon be put into operation. From this standpoint the annual report of the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants for 1967 gives an insight on the weaknesses of the 1965 Race Relations Act, and also of problems which are likely to arise with the existing Act.

Since its formation in 1965 the National Committee itself has experienced severe stresses and strains. As an official committee closely associated with the Race Relations Board and the Government it came under strong criticism for its failure to make a stronger stand against the principle and practice of colour discrimination in the Government's immigration policy, and the absence of any provision in the previous Race Relations Act to deal with discrimination in respect of employment, housing, credit and insurance.

With the Government's exclusion of Asian immigrants from Kenya early this year sharp differences arose within the National Committee as to whether it was worth while to carry on, and several members resigned from the Committee. However, it has since carried on its work, but under the new 1968 Act it will be dissolved, and replaced by a Government-appointed Community Relations Commission. There are also sharp differences on

² *Ny Dag*, April 20th-May 2nd, 1968.

this matter, for there does not seem to be any provision for adequate representation on the Commission by organisations of immigrant organisations.

However, the 1967 annual report is quite frank on the problems with which it was faced under the old 1965 Race Relations Act:

"From its inception the National Committee has encountered the frustrations of trying to tackle a deteriorating situation by voluntary and persuasive means alone. From its own experience and that of the voluntary liaison committees all over the country it came at an early stage to the inescapable conclusion that these means were insufficient and that there must be legal sanctions" (p. 8).

Because of its strong ties with the Government, the National Committee itself was not only faced with a serious problem of taking a firmer stand against racial discrimination, but with being clear on its own function. The 1967 report reflects this:

"It is easy enough to form an organisation with grandiloquent aims and objects such as promoting integration and securing equal rights. It is much more difficult to determine the precise methods of work which are going to achieve the maximum progress . . . During the year many race relations enthusiasts have fallen into the trap of trying to gauge the success or failure of various organisations by their own personal idea of how all-embracing, all-purpose, all-achieving organisation should proceed. For some it should be the mouthpiece of immigrants, for others the force to educate the host community. For some militancy and demonstration are the only answer, for others polite, multi-racial gatherings handling severe problems with kid gloves."

Surely, there need be no conflict between being the "mouthpiece of immigrants" and educating the "host community." The report itself concludes that a "combination of methods" is needed, and there must be inevitably a "spectrum of organisations and approaches." This is true enough, for immigrant organisations will obviously differ in their approach, and certainly all of them will differ a great deal from the approach made by distinctly British organisations.

The Reason of Anger

It goes on to define four different kinds of organisations with different views and methods:

- (1) Establishment bodies, dedicated to careful and orthodox methods of work.
- (2) Those which concentrate mainly on campaigning and demonstrating, but which join in consultation with bodies with which they disagree.
- (3) Those which reject any co-operation with the establishment, and "are dedicated to a policy of harassment and exposure."

- (4) Fringe organisations of racialists, the "black racialists being the logical, if strange, neighbours of the white ones" in offering "only the negative policies of total rejection and unreason."

The National Committee leaves no doubt where it stood in this matter. It believed in "moderation," for "success depends on retaining the confidence of the authorities in order that one's views will be heeded when it comes to policy-making." As for the other organisations, the report expresses the view that:

"Fortunate indeed are the forces of extreme militancy and unreason, for to them goes the emotional satisfaction of constantly exploding with anger at the injustices they see around them . . . This is a haven for those, black or white, who are in search of a cause rather than of solutions."

True, it is also critical of those who content themselves with a patronising attitude, whose "form of evasion of real problems is to patronise and to be bent on 'doing good' from a position of superiority."

However, what is clearly implied is that those who explode with anger against injustices do not exercise any reason on this problem! On the other hand, one could argue *it is precisely these people who apply their reason to the problem, for genuine anger against injustice can lead to real activity, and effective steps to put things right.*

Community Relations Commission

Now that the National Committee is being replaced with a "Community Relations Commission" it is essential there should be clarity on its functions and composition. It will start off under the severe handicap of serious gaps in the new Race Relations Act. Instead of being dealt with by the Commission, complaints of discrimination in employment will first go to the Department of Employment and Production, and shipowners are actually excluded from the Act.

There is no time limit on conciliation procedure, and no right to call for witnesses and documents, and employers are allowed to keep a "racial balance", which can mean the exclusion of non-white workers. And the discriminatory Commonwealth Immigrants Act and White Paper still remain.

The West Indian Standing Conference (which represents many West Indian organisations) has already refused to co-operate with the new Community Relations Commission on the grounds that it does not provide for the representation of immigrant organisations. For his own reasons the Archbishop of Canterbury (who was chairman of the National Committee) has also refused to serve.

However, there is still time to exert mass pressure to ensure that the new Commission is more rep-

representative, and that it carries out a more determined fight against all forms of racial discrimination. With all its weaknesses the new Act is a step forward, and local committees will be able to play a bigger part in reporting all cases of racial discrimination and taking effective measures to ensure that legal action is taken by the Race Relations Board if methods of conciliation have not been successful.

Marxism and Population

The recent study by Parviz Khalatbari of *Overpopulation in the Developing Countries*³ is also an attempt, as its sub-title indicates, to contribute towards a Marxist theory of population.

Marxists have so often, he thinks, focused so much of their attention on the fight against Malthusianism, that they have tended to neglect the development of a general theory of population, though the basis of the approach to such a theory is contained, in his opinion, in the classics of Marxism-Leninism.

After general discussion of the theory of population, the author proceeds to study population trends in Europe and in the developing countries. The rapid growth of population, he believes, is a comparatively new historical phenomenon.

In the third chapter he examines problems of overpopulation, particularly the relations of population and overpopulation to development of productive forces and productive relations. Overpopulation in the developing countries, he considers, arises above all from colonialism and its effect on economic and cultural developments.

Discussing problems of population stabilisation, the author sees an effective solution of the problem only in the process of economic growth which presupposes a radical change in the relations of production, an advance along the road to socialism. Birth control and family planning cannot be, he considers, the main lines of a solution of the population problem of the developing countries, but should take their place as practical measures of population stabilisation within a socialist society.

At the end of his book, the author appeals strongly and urgently for international co-operation for a rapid advance of the productive forces of the developing countries.

One of the particular interests of this study is that within the bibliography it contains a useful list of books and articles on the population question published in the socialist countries.

³ Parviz Khalatbari—*Überbevölkerung in den Entwicklungsländern: ein Beitrag zur marxistischen Bevölkerungstheorie*, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1968. 288 pages.

History of CPGB—Volume I

The first volume of James Klugmann's *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain* is being published by Lawrence & Wishart on September 19th.

This volume covers the history of the Party—and of the labour movement—from 1919 to 1924. Some may complain that this only just gets the History started. The choice was between writing an "outline history" which would contain little more than generalities, and a full history which would relate and seek to explain and interpret in detail the events as they actually happened. The second course has been chosen, meaning that each volume will cover only a comparatively short period.

The first volume starts with the negotiations which led up to the foundation of the Party at the London Unity Convention in 1920 followed by the Leeds Convention (the "Second Congress") at the beginning of 1921. Here a detailed account is rendered of the composition and policies of the various parties and groups which united to form the Communist Party, and of the two great issues over which the hottest debates took place—participation in Parliamentary elections and Parliamentary activities, and affiliation to the Labour Party.

On the Parliamentary issue, the History deals in detail with the first electoral contest in which Bob Stewart stood as Party candidate in the Caerphilly by-election in 1921; and then with the Party's general election campaigns in 1922, 1923 and 1924 (elections came thick and fast in those exciting years). Particulars are given about the first Communist MPs.

The Party was no sooner established than it was plunged into the thick of major economic and political battles. The record of those early years is a proud one—solidarity with the miners, the engineers, the dockers, the building workers; the establishment of militant mass organisation of the unemployed; defence of the USSR, participation in the Russian Famine Relief campaign, struggle for British Government recognition of the USSR; opposition to war in the Near East and to the occupation of the Ruhr in 1922, to the Curzon Ultimatum in 1923, and to the Dawes Plan in 1924; renewed anti-war campaign in 1924; opposition to rearmament; solidarity and alliance with the anti-imperialist struggle of colonial peoples, and in particular with the Chinese people's struggle in 1924.

The British Government paid the Party the compliment of continuous persecution in those years; and the right-wing leaders of the Labour Party, having got affiliation rejected, proceeded to the exclusion of Communists from individual membership of the Labour Party.

The last chapter of this volume deals with the first Labour Government, formed under the premier-

ship of Ramsay MacDonald, which lasted from January to August 1924. The sorry record of those eight months has been repeated on a larger scale in subsequent years, and is being repeated at this very moment. The detailed analysis contained in this History, both of the policies of the right-wing Labour ministers and of the efforts of the Party and the Left to oppose them, is full of lessons for today. The first Labour Government eventually fell over the issue of "the Campbell Case" (arising from the Party's publication of an "Open Letter to the Fighting Forces"), and the subsequent Tory victory was assisted by the notorious forgery of the "Zinoviev Letter."

The History deals too with the development of Party organisation in this period, the first decisive steps from the organisation of a propagandist sect to that of a fighting disciplined democratic political party. The Party's weaknesses and mistakes are not spared. At the root of most of them lay the sectarianism endemic in the fighting Left. James Klugmann writes on the second page:

"Militant British workers who had come by their own experience to hate the policies of the reformist leaders, when they began to tear themselves away from opportunism very easily could, as it were, tear themselves by the roots from the labour movement, and in their revolutionary disgust isolate themselves from the mass of the workers still under opportunist influence. Sectarianism was the reverse side of opportunism, born of it and against it, but often aiding it unawares."

The second volume will be published early in 1969. It deals with the General Strike of 1926, together with the formation of the Minority Movement, unemployed struggles and the Hands-Off-China campaign. It reviews in detail the Communist Party's anti-imperialist policies and activities, together with the further development of Party organisation. Work on the third volume, in which Jack Cohen will collaborate with James Klugmann, is now beginning.

Young Christians in Conference

Dialogue was the keynote of the fourth Conference of Christian Youth in Edinburgh at the end of July. It took two forms: one of the eight "workshops" made a study of "Christ and Marx" specifically; but the whole gathering of some 850 young people were deeply concerned with human, social and political issues, as the titles of the other "workshops" indicates: "Democracy—has it a Future?"; "World Poverty and Us"; "What is Man?"; "The Church for Others"; "Education for Living"; "The Power Game"; and "Responsible Revolution?"

This concentration naturally created some tension, which at times expressed itself in sharp conflict.

Before even the Conference began, notice was given of a motion demanding that it concentrate on the problem of world poverty exclusively; that all workshops "should make this the basis of their discussions; and that they work towards a programme of action which will result in greater social justice."

A counter-blast soon appeared in the form of a resolution which accused the Conference of having lost any specifically Christian and religious character, and having become nothing but a humanist and political gathering. Both resolutions were discussed with deep feeling, but neither was voted on; and a situation which at times looked like total conflict, ended satisfactorily in a much wider appreciation of different points of view.

It is very significant that these young people, by no means all students, and all deeply concerned with the problems of their time, should concentrate so heavily on world hunger and poverty.

The concern is very deep, but ideas continue to be confused; and in spite of a fairly general acceptance of the obligation to take part in politics, there is still a widespread hankering after individual gestures and sacrifice. These have their significance in stinging the public conscience, but they are not a solution and if they become as they sometimes do, a substitute for more fundamental measures, can be positively harmful. The relationship of the continuance of capitalist exploitation to world hunger is far from being adequately understood. If it were, of course, we should be a big step nearer to world socialism. This Conference undoubtedly helped in developing such understanding.

The workshop on "Christ and Marx," at which Jack Dunman, a member of the Communist Party, Laurence Bright, the well-known Dominican priest, and Ronald Beasley, social worker for the Church of Scotland, were the consultants, made a report which was received by the whole Conference and is worth quoting:

"The Christ and Marx Workshop differs from most of the others in one important respect. Most of us who took part in it, we have discovered, had lacked any very clear concept of what Marxism involves. Marxism is an entire philosophy, a particular and unique view of history, a radical approach to economics and as a result of all this throws a new and challenging light on our understanding and interpretation of Jesus Christ and His teaching. So perhaps more than any other workshop, we found ourselves learning hard and fast. This left us with little or no time to produce anything corresponding to the practical results which other workshops have been able to produce. However this report is in no sense an apology for this, because one thing which we have all gained is a deep sense of the value of dialogue between Christians and Marxists and a

determination to forward that dialogue with all the enthusiasm and zest of which we are capable.

"We have grown up in an atmosphere of strong prejudice against all things Marxist. Every nursery has been equipped with its communist bogeyman. Now we invite you to leave your guns and capitalist playpens and join us outside in the fresh air of unbiased debate.

"Practically speaking, we would urge all members of the conference to get in contact with Socialists and Communists in their own local area and to explore with them the common interests and insights which Marxists and Christians share and to arrive

at a deeper understanding of the apparent differences. We do not stop at recommending talking together as dialogue between committed Christians and Marxists, but should seek to involve all young people. We don't recommend talk, but action.

"Marx said: 'The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it'."

These hundred or so young people can, and will, give a powerful impetus to the Marxist-Christian Dialogue, throughout the country, and in other countries.

Political Committee Statement on Czechoslovakia

The following statement was issued by the Political Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain in the afternoon of August 21st, 1968. It reached us just as we were finally going to press. Further documents and comments on the Czechoslovak situation will be published in our October issue.

We deplore the entry of troops of some of the Warsaw Pact countries into Czechoslovakia.

We have made clear in our previous statements our view that differences between Communist Parties should be resolved by discussions on the basis of mutual trust and confidence, and where Socialist countries are concerned, respecting the sovereignty of each country.

The Czechoslovak Communist Party leadership has been engaged in the difficult task of rectifying wrong policies pursued in the past, and strengthening Socialist democracy.

It has warned of the activities of anti-Socialist forces in the country and their attempts to take advantage of this process, and has been taking measures to deal with them.

It was making preparations for the forthcoming Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party on September 9th at which the future policy of the Party was to be decided.

Whatever differences of view there might be among Socialist countries about developments in Czechoslovakia, in our view, military intervention is completely unjustified.

We welcomed the results of the Cierna and Bratislava meetings because we considered that they showed that on the basis of mutual trust, confidence and understanding, it is possible to find an agreed basis for dealing with problems affecting Socialist countries.

If there was dissatisfaction on the part of any of the participants with the carrying out of the understandings reached, there should have been further discussions to try to resolve the problems.

The anxiety of all Socialist countries about the security of the Socialist system and the constant threat from imperialism is shared by Communists everywhere.

The hypocritical attempt of the imperialists, including former Munichites in Britain, and Hitler's successors in West Germany, to pose as friends of Czechoslovakia, is a cover for the bitter enmity which they have always shown, and still show, towards its people. This enmity was all the stronger since Czechoslovakia became a Socialist State.

But we consider that the way to defend socialism and rebuff imperialism is to establish voluntary and mutual co-operation between the Socialist States and Communist Parties, based on the national sovereignty and autonomy of each Party and Government.

We express the hope that agreement will be reached on the immediate withdrawal of the troops of the five countries from Czechoslovakia, and relations between their Governments and Parties and the Czechoslovak Government and Party re-established on a normal basis.

An emergency meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain will be held on Saturday, August 24th.

The Movement and the Commission

Delusions about Donovan

J. R. Campbell

THE controversy around the Donovan report is starting in the working class movement in Britain with a majority of the Labour Members of Parliament contributing to the debate favourably disposed towards the report. Those groups believe that the Tory offensive against the unions has been circumvented and that, if a few minor items are eliminated, the report can be a fitting basis for legislation reforming the British trade union movement in a progressive way. We believe that this is profoundly mistaken and that the implementation of the central features of this report will effectively undermine the chief progressive features of British trade unionism as it exists today to the detriment of the workers' standard of life and the growth of the trade union movement.

Why the Commission?

The Royal Commission, in the main, is a product of the Tory onslaught against the trade unions which began to develop in the late 1950's. It had long been understood by the Tories that skilful press misrepresentation could make the unions unpopular and that some of this unpopularity could rub off on the Labour Party. The Labour Right Wing feared this too and were eager to restrain the unions particularly before a General Election. The main complaint of the Tories concerned the prevalence of "unofficial and unconstitutional strikes," i.e. strikes which had not the backing of a trade union executive. The description is a complete misnomer. In Britain all workers, whether trade unionists or not, have a right to withdraw their labour. There is nothing in British trade union law to prevent them doing so, and for good or evil Britain has no written constitution which prevents them from doing so.

There are a few laws relating to public services like gas and water which can be used against trade unionists who successfully hold up these services, but these apply whether the strike is sanctioned by the union executive or not. In fact these laws have seldom been applied and have to do with the

character of the public service in which the strike is taking place, and not to whether or not it has the sanction of the union executive.

An unofficial strike is simply one that is not sanctioned by the union executive and in which strike pay is not given. In quite a number of cases, it is not forbidden by the executive. It is simply not positively supported. It is therefore a pure trick to pretend that such strikes are violations of some law or constitution and are therefore, as far as strikes go, unusually wicked. Yet this is a major argument of the Tories.

The Tory Proposals

The other complaint of the Tories is that collective agreements between unions and employers are not usually drawn up in the form of a commercial contract, and unions or groups of workers cannot be made liable for breach of contract, simply because their members have unofficially gone on strike.

The Royal Commission clarified the law somewhat when it pointed out that if employers and unions having signed a trade union agreement, wanted it to be made a contract, with penalties for infringement, there is nothing to stop them from doing so.

What the Tories clearly want is something different. They want *all* trade union agreements to be imposed on workers as a commercial contract, even when the workers do not want it.

Further the Tories complained of trade union executives' injustices vis-à-vis their members, and suggested that the latter needed more legal protection.

What the Tories clearly want is not to induce employers and unions to make a trade union agreement a collective contract by mutual consent. What they want is for the State to make all union agreements contracts in spite of the opposition of the unions to this procedure.

The Tory spokesman on Trade Union affairs, Mr. R. H. Carr (Mitcham) said in the Commons Debate on July 16th:

"Experience in practice in other countries shows that, on the contrary it [legislation against the unions on Tory lines] strengthens responsible trade union authority. The majority of trade union leaders in other countries will confirm that this had been their experience, even though, as for example in Sweden and the United States, they feared and fought bitterly against the introduction of the legislation in the first place. They may even now wish to see it changed in points of detail, but in principle they accept and support the system because they have found, in practice, that it has enabled them to win better conditions for their members than they otherwise would have been able to do."

This is breath-bereaving. The American unions have never ceased to protest against the imposition of the notorious Taft-Hartley Act and to demand its repeal. It does not occur to Mr. Carr to indicate that trade union membership in the United States as a proportion of the total labour force is shrinking as a result of this Act. Evidently that is what the Tories want to see here.

The Donovan Commission has therefore won a great deal of goodwill in rejecting the Tory ideas of the type of legislation required to shackle the trade unions. This could create the impression that this report is in the main on correct progressive lines and should, with a few minor amendments, be strongly supported. We believe that this is entirely wrong. The proposals of the report are more subtle than those of the Tories but are none the less reactionary.

Donovan's Basic Proposals

The basic proposition of the report is that full employment, or near full employment, has enormously strengthened the power of the unions, particularly of their shop stewards organisations and that it is necessary for the state to intervene as a countervailing power, otherwise the power of the unions in the economy will grow to an excessive extent:

"Sooner or later full employment leads to incomes policy. Rising or full employment is almost always accompanied by increases in pay which outstrip any rise in productivity and therefore leads to higher costs and higher prices. At the same time demands for goods and services rise and imports go up. This leads to difficulties at home, and even more abroad. Not only do we import more goods than we otherwise should but if our prices rise faster than those of other countries with which we compete our earnings from exports suffer; and a balance of payments crisis follows. In Britain we have a series of incomes policies since 1948, when the post-war Labour Government called for a period of wage restraint, most of them concerned almost exclusively with restricting the rate of increase of

wage and salary rates. Experience over the last three years has demonstrated that restricting rates is not enough. Earnings rise faster than rates, so that policy makers have become increasingly concerned with the agreements and methods of payment in the factory."

This is the only thing resembling an analysis in the entire report. And it puts the major responsibility for Britain's economic plight on payments by results agreements in the factory. Although most other people who analyse Britain's balance of payments problem stress such negative factors as excessive overseas military expenditure, and excessive export of capital, Donovan pins it all on the British system of collective bargaining, particularly that on the factory floor. It is imperative, he and his colleagues believe, that this must be weakened.

Above all the report heartily dislikes those situations where there is close co-operation between the official district machinery of the unions and the shop stewards. Listen to this tearful complaint:

"The significance of this can be illustrated by reference to a feature of the British Trade Union Movement, which many managers consider to be one of the greatest obstacles to reform in industrial relations—the powers exercised by district committees of the Amalgamated Engineering Union. These powers come from two sources: the tradition of regulating working practices on a district basis, and the constitution of a district committee, which tends to make it a coalition of representatives of the most powerful groups of stewards in the district. Accordingly the committee's writ runs through the district without the leave of the employers and is admirably placed to resist change. There is little hope that this situation can be changed by amending the union rules for district committee representatives are firmly entrenched in the rule-making body and in the union's Final Appeal Court. However the unusual powers of the district committee are largely due to its ability to operate outside collective bargaining or on the margins."

Note the ingrained bias against the District Committee. Of course such close links between the committee and the shop stewards make it a body "admirably placed to resist change" when it is considered to be against the interests of the workers, but it is equally admirably placed to promote change when it is in the interests of the workers. However the Commission is clearly interested in reducing the power of the shop stewards and the district committees in the Engineering Industry.

Industrial Relations Commission

However the Commission thinks that changes might be brought about if the bosses in the large firms would promote productivity agreements in the factories. This might change the character of the

district committees. Instead of shop stewards negotiating sectional [fragmented] agreements in factories from time to time, they should be induced to conclude comprehensive factory agreements, covering everything going on in the factory. "Of course the transformation would not take place if the [district] committees refused to have anything to do with comprehensive factory agreements, but the experience of productivity bargaining suggests that most of them will not do so."

Though the employers are expected to take the initiative to promote this type of productivity bargaining the Donovan Commission thinks that this must be assisted by legislation in the form of an Industrial Relations Act, setting up an Industrial Relations Commission. This Commission will be charged with the promotion of factory or company productivity agreements, which it is believed will form the basis of a complete change in British industry, and will make possible an entirely new system of industrial relations.

The main bodies initiating these changes are expected to be the top managements in the largest factories in Britain. Unless they can be induced to sponsor the necessary changes the scheme cannot get off the ground. They must however be strongly supported by the state, which will work (with all the State's coercive powers in the background) to remove all the obstacles to the scheme. The trade unions will be expected to co-operate. They will have representation on the proposed Industrial Relations Commission but it is very clear that in the opening stages the prime movers in this undertaking will be the top managements and the State organisations, particularly the new Industrial Relations Commission. The Industrial Relations Commission will have a full-time Chairman and other full-time and part-time members. "who should include persons with practical experience in industrial relations, and [have] power to appoint its own administrative and research staff. Amongst its duties the Commission will be expected, on a reference from the Secretary of State for Employment and Productivity, to investigate and report upon cases and problems arising out of the registration of agreements."

An early step to be undertaken is for the larger companies, 221 in number, each of which employ 5,000 workers or more, to register their collective agreements with the Department of Employment and Productivity. In most cases only a minority of companies will have fully comprehensive factory or company agreements, covering all the major questions, arising within the factory. If companies do not have any agreements, excepting those which are concluded nationally, they will be expected to conclude factory or company agree-

ments which cover a number of points, not usually contained in national agreements. These will include:

- Comprehensive and authoritative collective bargaining machinery for negotiations at a factory or company level.
- Procedures for the "rapid and equitable settlement of grievances".
- Agreements with regard to the functions of shop stewards.
- Agreements on redundancy.
- Rules governing disciplinary matters, including dismissals and protection for appeals.
- Regular safety discussions.

The above include a number of questions, which are still not negotiable in many factories and at first sight it may appear as if vast concessions to the trade union movement are being proposed. In fact, the concessions are contingent on the trade unions agreeing to be put in a very restrictive strait-jacket indeed.

The large companies will then register their agreements with the Department of Employment and Productivity which will then proceed to examine whether they cover all the points that a model factory agreement should and draw the companies attention to whatever is lacking. It could very well arise however that some group of workers in a company is resisting the conclusion of such an agreement. They may prefer to adhere to their existing systems of payment by results, rather than change them by a factory-wide collective agreement based on measured day work, involving the abolition of tea-breaks, the re-grading of groups of workers, the general intensification of labour, due to the removal of shop steward controls, on the pace of equipment etc. They may think that the long run effect of such systems will be enormously to increase the power of the management and to weaken the power of the workers' representatives.

The Drive for Factory Agreements

The company may then inform the Ministry of Employment and Productivity that because of this resistance it is unable to include a comprehensive agreement of the kind suggested and the Ministry will then inform the Industrial Relations Commission which will then persuade or pressurise the reluctant workers to abandon their resistance, so that the comprehensive agreement can be concluded.

In a further paragraph the report says: "If the reform was largely successful, so that the relations of most companies of any size were carried on within the framework of clear and effective agreements, and yet stoppages in breach of these agreements remained a common occurrence, it would be possible to consider enacting such penalty

against trade unions or workers responsible for such stoppages (and of course against managers and employers where they are responsible)."

This must be seen in relation to the drive in factory and company agreements to get rid of conventional piece-work in favour of various forms of measured day work which involve the intensification of labour. There can be a considerable resistance to this. Anyone trying to sweep the current system of P.B.R. aside must expect resistance. They were not achieved in a day and they will not be demolished in a day, if at all. Those seeking to achieve this very questionable change must expect to encounter resistance and clearly the Industrial Relations Commission is given powers to break this resistance by state coercion.

Devious Tactics

This is quite clearly a repetition of the devious tactics adopted in relation to the Incomes Policy. It was first proclaimed that it was a purely voluntary policy, based on a declaration of intent agreed to by Government, employers and trade unions, then it was said that there must be some state compulsion held in reserve only to be used if a tiny minority of people of ill will refused to co-operate, and then the voluntary aspects of the policy faded away, and compulsion became the rule. Ministers lecture the workers who want better terms than they are being offered, blaming them for undermining the country.

In the Industrial Relations Commission all appears voluntary at first but the whole structure proposed could be given compulsory backing in the twinkling of any eye.

The incomes policy has to a considerable extent been evaded by the existence of workshop bargaining. The Confederation of British Industry in its evidence doubted the wisdom of plant bargaining. "If widely resorted to," it complains, "it makes impossible any national planning with regard to incomes; that in conditions of full employment [it] cannot be other than inflationary; that it encourages instability in the labour force (through the "bidding up" for labour to which it gives rise); that it increases the scope for unofficial strikes and other forms of industrial action; and that it is calculated to weaken the organisation of trade unions and employers organisations, to the ultimate detriment of both workers and management, and of the economy."

The Donovan Commission pooh-poohs this. What the Confederation of British Industry fears is happening now and the comprehensive factory or company bargains, which the Commission is proposing, is the way to stop it. What the Confederation is describing is the consequence of collective

bargaining as it is now, practised with the continuous shift from industry-wide decision making to workshop arrangements, understandings, and practices. That state of affairs weakens unions and employers associations, promotes unofficial strikes, and "bidding up" is inflationary and undermines incomes policy.

Nothing could be clearer. The power of trade union workshop organisation is growing because in a society which is fairly rapidly changing, it is only in the work place that workers standards can be protected. So far from the Commission regarding this as a good thing, it regards this as an unmitigated horror, which has to be brought to an end. The comprehensive factory and company agreements would bring the "bidding up" of labour into the open and thus render it susceptible to control. Finally they would assist the planning of incomes. "Incomes policy must continue a lame and halting exercise so long as it consists in the planning of industry-wide agreements most of which exercise an inadequate control over pay."

Aubrey for Bureaucracy

Thus the outcome of the three years investigation of the Commission is that the incomes policy must be given more teeth, particularly in relation to negotiations on the workshop floor. With hundreds of sectional agreements in a large factory, the bureaucratic apparatus of the Prices and Incomes Board is helpless. But with one plant agreement, covering everything, Mr. Aubrey Jones' bureaucratic apparatus has something to grasp. The factory agreement can be made to conform to the "nil norm" for increases or whatever nostrum is in vogue at the PIB at any particular movement, and the bureaucratic power to regulate earnings will be enormously increased. The power of the workshop organisation of the unions is to be sharply diminished. The power of the management supported by the state is to be sharply increased. None of the apparently "progressive" features of the report should be allowed to obscure this fact.

The famous Brookings Institution Report on Britain's Economic Prospects¹ contrasts the British piece-work systems, with those (usually some form of measured day work) operating in the USA. In the UK, according to one British manager giving evidence to the Royal Commission, "Management must be prepared to negotiate every time it wishes to make a change. The result is we tend to bargain under pressure all the time." In America, according to this manager, it is quite otherwise. "Not only can they in the USA invest more but they can get

¹ *Britain's Economic Prospects*, Brookings Institution (U.S.A.), Allen & Unwin, 72s.

maximum use as quickly as possible. Cutting in changes in the USA is a much quicker process than in the UK." This gives a somewhat exaggerated view of the restrictions of British managements vis-à-vis shop stewards and trade unions. But it is broadly true that shop stewards in many cases can negotiate on the terms in which new techniques can be introduced prior to its installation. In the American system, which Brookings praises to the skies, the will of the management (the so-called managerial functions) prevails.

Now this is exactly what most factory or company productivity agreements aim to do—enormously to increase the powers of the management and enormously to reduce the powers of the shop stewards.

Surely this is one of the most brazen developments in British industrial history. A Royal Commission is appointed to consider the functioning of trade unions and employers association and its main recommendation is that the British system of workshop negotiations shall be completely wiped out and shall be replaced by an American system of factory and company bargaining which reinforces the autocratic power of management and reduces the power of the workers representatives. Relations between management and workers on the factory floor have to be completely changed to the detriment of the unions. All this is to be done quite frivolously without any attempt to assess its effect on British industry or the economy taken as a whole. And this change was, during the three years life of the Royal Commission, never discussed in depth with the trade union witnesses who appeared before it.

Against Dismissals

The Commission appears to attach such an importance to negotiations at the workshop level that one is naturally interested in what it says about "safeguards for employees against unfair dismissals." Where it deals with factories in any detail the report takes as its examples exceedingly well organised factories in the engineering industry where the shop stewards are supported by a resolute district committee. This situation is by no means typical of the engineering industry as a whole, not to speak of those poorly organised factories in many poorly organised industries where the unions are often unable to maintain a moderately effective cadre of shop stewards. To protect shop stewards from arbitrary managements in such factories is the only guarantee of reasonable negotiations and the development of trade unionism.

The Commission naturally devotes a great deal of attention to the relation between such dismissals and unofficial strikes.

"From the point of view of industrial peace, it is plain also that the present situation leaves much to be desired. In the period 1964-66 some 276 unofficial strikes took place each year on average as a result of disputes about whether individuals should or should not be employed, suspended or dismissed. The committee on dismissals analysed stoppages—whether official or unofficial—arising out of dismissals other than redundancies over this period and found that there were on an average 203 a year. It can be argued that the right to secure a speedy and impartial decision on the justification for a dismissal might have averted many of these stoppages, though some cases would no doubt have occurred, where workers were taking spontaneous action to prevent a dismissal taking effect."

So the Commission recommends two things, that there should be an immediate programme not only to encourage the development and extension of satisfactory voluntary procedure, but also the adoption of legislation to set up statutory machinery to hear appeals against dismissals.

Now unofficial strikes against dismissals often take place, not because there is not, in quite a number of cases, voluntary machinery for appeals, but because once a worker is outside the factory gate, he is seldom reinstated. The only way a really influential shop steward can be protected is to prevent the management from excluding him from the factory, by a swift and effective unofficial strike. It is the fear of this action on the part of managements that keeps shop stewards in every industry from victimisation.

The Royal Commission argues that such action in the future will be totally unnecessary and proposes to set up a labour tribunal to try all complaints against unfair dismissals and proposes remedies. The labour tribunal has not the right, however, to propose that a dismissed worker be reinstated but only that he be compensated. But it is precisely the arbitrary dismissal of trusted shop stewards which has provoked some of the most bitter unofficial strikes. Here are some of the Commission's arguments on why a worker who is judged by the labour tribunal to have been victimised cannot be reinstated:

"While a claim by a dismissed employee is pending, what is his position to be? It has been suggested that until the matter is decided the effect of the dismissal should be suspended since the carrying out of the dismissal before then would amount to allowing 'punishment' to precede 'trial'. We see the force of this view but in our opinion it would be highly undesirable to deprive the employer of the power to dismiss without notice for misconduct, and it follows that termination without due notice must also be allowed.

"It would be more in accordance with reality, and in our view therefore preferable, to lay down

an order for compensation as a primary relief with the order lapsing only in the event of *both* parties exercising the option of reinstatement within a brief time limit."

So unless the employer voluntarily agrees to reinstatement the only thing the tribunal can do is to award monetary compensation to a worker judged to be unfairly dismissed. The Commission has the audacity to expect the workers to give up the right to strike to protect say a convenor of shop stewards from being victimised in return for taking the case before a labour tribunal (the worker remaining dismissed meantime), a tribunal which will not be able to order reinstatement, but only compensation, if the worker's appeal is upheld. This gives even less protection from dismissal than many shop stewards have under existing arrangements and in well organised factories the workers are likely to oppose it utterly.

Recognising Unions

The Commission also refuses to pressurise managements to recognise trade unions.

A number of witnesses before the Royal Commission recommended that managements everywhere be compelled to recognise trade unions. The Commission declares "that collective bargaining is the best method of conducting industrial relations. There is therefore wider scope in Britain for extending both the subject matter of collective bargaining and the number of workers covered by collective agreements."

It also declares against the proposition supported by many employers organisations that white collared workers should not be organised in trade unions. Yet when it comes to the point it refuses to support the proposition that all employers should be compelled to recognise trade unions, this despite the fact that it admits that "many witnesses have made suggestions for new machinery to deal with disputed claims by trade unions for recognition." It vigorously refuses any suggestions for making this compulsory on two contradictory grounds. To proposals that a union should be recognised if a certain percentage of its employees are organised in a trade union, it says that any percentage fixed might be too high. It might prevent a union from getting recognition in some other way, which would enable it successfully to organise a majority of a given firm. The Royal Commission then swings round and argues that if trade unions were given a right to recognition in all firms this might be a stimulus to "certain mushroom organisations" (not specified) to attempt to organise workers. So after pussyfooting around the problems arising, the Royal Commission comes to the conclusion that the question of whether trade unions should

be recognised in any specific case should be dealt with by the Industrial Relations Commission (excuse the plethora of commissions dear reader). But when the Industrial Relations Commission has dealt with a particular case, and thinks that there ought to be recognition, it has no means of enforcing this decision. It has only the right to recommend and the employer has equally the right to reject. "We propose no penalties on companies which refuse to recognise trade unions." (Page 51) The Royal Commission runs away from the problem and yet its attitude on this question is being presented as one of the good things in its report.

Penalties against Strikers

When it comes to unofficial strikes however the Royal Commission shows no reluctance to employ legal sanctions. Its main contention is that the fundamental remedy for unofficial strikes is the gradual creation of a new system of industrial relations—through the agency of the Industrial Relations Commission. It does not propose however to allow its favourite remedy time to work but immediately proceeds to advocate an alteration in the law which will allow action against unofficial strikers. Hitherto the exercise of the strike weapon has been legal to all groups of workers whether they are organised in a trade union or not. In non-legal language it is the worker and not merely the trade union who has the right to strike. Spontaneous strikes or strikes led by unofficial bodies like the Joint Building Sites Committee or the Docks Liaison Committee are perfectly legal. That is why the term "unconstitutional" strike is such misleading nonsense. A majority of the Royal Commission now proposes, in effect, that the right to strike be retained only by trade unions and that unofficial strikers be exposed to court actions for "civil conspiracy."

A minority of the Commission (George Woodcock, Eric Wigham, Lord Collison, Professor Kahn-Freund and Professor Clegg) strongly resist this threatened victimisation of unofficial strikers, and claim that it is necessary to remove the causes of unofficial strikes and to refrain from punishing unofficial strikers. The unions will no doubt strongly resist this change in the law. It would be a mistake to believe however, if this proposed change in the law were dropped, a really significant change in the character of the Donovan Report would be achieved.

The Crux of the Report

The key section of the Report on which everything else turns is the proposal for the Industrial Relations Act setting up the Industrial Relations Commission. It is on the real menace of this body

that the attention of the movement should be largely concentrated.

A notable feature in the House of Commons debate was the lack of sharp opposition to the setting up of this body. The three parties seemed to favour something of this nature.

The TUC information broadsheet *Labour* quoted George Woodcock as saying on the day the Commission's Report was published—"Industrial relations are continuous relations. You don't improve them by giving one side power to break the other." The Report's central argument is that Britain's formal system of relations at national level is often at odds with the informal bargaining system set up at factory or local level. This was strongly supported by the TUC General Secretary. And he agreed that it was the root cause of conflict in industry:

"Given the task of encouraging the changes which will shift formal industrial relations procedure to company level is the Industrial Relations Commission.

"Looking ahead, Mr. Woodcock hoped that it would be given the broadest terms of reference. Equally he hoped it would be without compulsory powers. It is important to do things without threats of legal sanctions he declared.

"People have to want to do things not to be told."

It is clear that the General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress already accepts the Industrial Relations Commission as certain to be set up and is in favour of this.

Ten papers are being prepared for the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the TUC with regard to the recommendation of the Report.

Two of them will deal with the scope of industry-wide agreements and of company and factory agreements and their relation one to another. The development of the new relationships between full-time officers and shop stewards, and what this entails in terms of finance and training.

Misconceptions Galore

Finally the Prices and Incomes Board is prepared to welcome the Industrial Relations Commission, provided a proper demarcation agreement between it and the Commission is drawn up. There is therefore a danger that the general line of the Royal Commission will be accepted without examination in depth. Already superficial arguments in favour of its acceptance are beginning to spread.

Unless the central purpose of this Royal Commission Report is grasped the movement could be convinced that it is a good thing, that with some small modifications ought to be supported and that the Labour movement must be prepared wholeheartedly to co-operate with the Industrial Relations Commission. There is the same attitude of credulity

in many circles that was previously adopted to incomes policy, "the planned growth of wages" in the early stages. What's wrong with productivity bargaining, it is naively asked. "Some productivity bargains are not too bad."

Those who argue thus are deliberately ignoring what the report says about its object being to control the rise in factory earnings as obtained under the prevailing systems of payment by results and to substitute it with a factory or company wide collective agreement that can be made to conform with current prices and incomes policy. It is to make factory agreements and factory earnings subject to the bureaucratic and rigid control of the Prices and Incomes Board that this change is proposed. It is said quite openly that "drift", the rise in factory earnings through shop steward pressure must be stopped.

Under existing circumstances in the average factory whenever a new set of processes are introduced, there is a re-negotiation of prices and bonus times and some increase in earnings results. Most existing new style productivity agreements do not contain such provision. New equipment and its accompanying speed-up can go on for a long time before there is any new negotiations leading to an increase in wages at all.

Existing shop stewards powers are constantly growing as a result of shop floor pressure establishing new forms of "custom and practice." The Royal Commission proposes that future shop stewards powers will be part of the new written factory-wide collective agreements and in nearly all cases there will be attempts to restrict some of the powers at present exercised.

The general powers of the existing body of shop stewards will be diminished. Their right to negotiate on productive changes on the factory floor will be taken away from them. A lot of their power will pass to a restricted body of shop stewards plus some full-time officials designated to co-operate with the management with regard to the long term factory bargaining.

The one thing that trade unionists must be clear on is that the factory-wide agreement is aimed to strip the shop stewards in most factories of their existing powers of negotiation, to lower the ceiling of earnings that can be achieved in the factory, to reduce or abolish the right to question managerial decisions, and to put the shop stewards in a very tight constitutional strait-jacket.

National Agreements

It has been suggested that opposition to factory wide trade union agreements springs from a desire to reduce bargaining power on the factory floor and strengthen it in relation to national agreements.

This is not true. Factory floor negotiations (though not in the form now proposed) are absolutely essential, but so are national agreements establishing basic minima on wages, conditions and all kinds of fringe benefits.

A trade union is an organisation of working class power and must be prepared when necessary to use that power throughout the entire industry or group of industries. That is why it must never renounce its power to struggle against the employers and government as a whole. To abolish national agreements is to abolish the concept of solidarity. That must never be done. No factory agreement can prevent the rise of situations where the trade union can be called upon to exert its powers as a whole, against the employers in a given industry.

There could be no greater delusion than to believe that the Royal Commission is trying to reduce or abolish national agreements in order to increase the power of the unions in the factories. Of course it is out to weaken national agreements but it is equally concerned to reduce the power of the shop stewards in the factory by putting them into the strait-jacket of a restrictive factory or company wide agreement.

National or Local?

The relations between the national agreement and factory bargaining are a constant problem. Because some favourable results have been obtained by factory bargaining in the past, the workers in the better organised factories tend to be indifferent to the results of national negotiations and be relatively indifferent to trades union branch life as a whole. So the mass pressure behind the national claim tends to be much weaker than it need be. In the past when workers were thwarted with regard to the achievement of a national claim they consoled themselves with the thought that they would make it up with extra pressure in the workshop. In relation to the Prices and Incomes Policy they succeeded in quite a number of cases.

It is therefore imperative to recognise that the Government is now striving to rapidly change this situation. If the Royal Commission's policy succeeds the workers will not be able to make up by pressure on the shop floor for what they have failed to get elsewhere. For they will now be tied up in a factory agreement, timed to last for a given time, which absolutely forbids the groups and sectional pressures which achieved results in the past. There is therefore quite a danger of a cleavage between the best paid and the lowest paid workers in the same industry—a cleavage which is not based on the skill of the workers concerned but on their relative strength of organisation and the relative profitability of the firm. To preserve

industry-wide and nation-wide solidarity, the union must exert pressure to reduce this disparity, whether the Government or the Prices and Incomes Board like it or not.

The National Struggle

A nation-wide industrial struggle such as those of the seamen, the railwaymen and the dockers and busmen, at once exerts terrific economic pressure on the employing class and the Government and creates the most favourable conditions for obtaining concessions. A strike around a factory or company agreement does not exert a comparable pressure. It might stop Vauxhall motors while the other motor firms continue working. There is no pressure on the industry as a whole and less anxiety on the part of the Government. The workers in the striking firm demand "Why are we called out while the others are allowed to work and undermine our strike?"

Some features of the US strike situations could be repeated here. Company-wide strikes could be more brutal and prolonged and the gains less in proportion to the companies profitability and productivity very much less than they are in national strikes elsewhere. Those in the unions who are enamoured with this change must be prepared to spend a great deal more on *official* strikes, and the Government must face the possibility of a sharp increase in days lost per annum in such cases. This in turn could give them an excuse for legislation against *official* strikes.

New Type of Agreement

The new type of all embracing factory or company agreement (as distinct from sectional and PBR agreements) will be more difficult to frame and in the Royal Commission's opinion will require the services of more full time officers. This will probably be necessary whatever kind of factory bargaining is adopted, but the dangers of lop-sided attention to those factories where gains are easiest to get, and neglect of the more difficult factories, is obviously to be watched. Union Executives must be aware of the long term effects of some of the new type agreements which are meant to increase the full time officers role in negotiating the agreements and reduce the shop stewards role in continuously supervising all developments inside the factories. The ideal factory agreement in the eyes of the modern boss is one which emphasises the right of managements to manage and which reduces the shop stewards supervisory role and power.

It is essential that the workers and their unions should resist such agreements. Not the restriction but the growth of shop steward power in the workshop is essential to the growth of trade unionism.

Trade Union Education

It is essential in the eyes of the Royal Commission that the trade union cadres should be re-educated or if you like brainwashed:

"The need for shop steward training is immense. There are about 175,000 shop stewards, of whom more than two-thirds have received no training of any kind, and turnover runs at the rate of 15 per cent per year. . . . Among the various means of providing training, day release course appear to offer the best prospects of adequate training on a considerable scale. Day release courses involve absence from work (on full pay) for a day a week over period of 12 or more weeks, and the employers co-operation is therefore needed."

It is of course true that many shop stewards have not received formal training. They have however picked up elements of militant trade unionist thought in the workshop and have watched existing shop stewards at work. In the course of their development they have acquired a Socialist bias, not always clearly defined, but at least recognising that monopoly capitalist society is an exploiting society which the workers must in some way change. Their strategy is therefore to resist all policies aiming at the utmost intensification of the workers labour, to obtain as much as possible from factory bargaining without giving away vital principles, and to work for the replacement of state monopoly capitalism by Socialism.

There is however an opposing philosophy increasingly in vogue at business schools. It is that present day society is based on the fruitful co-operation of labour and management. Both must co-operate to modernise it and make it more efficient so that it can divide the fruits of this efficiency between higher wages for the workers and higher profits for the firm. In this view class conflict is dreadfully old fashioned. Class co-operation in modernisation is the best thing. Many shop stewards courses direct the thinking of the workers in this direction. That is why we need trade union courses which start from the basis of the workers advancing to challenge monopoly capitalist society and not in

learning to conform to it. These can only be conducted by trade unions and working class political parties.

In its promised White Paper the Government will doubtless seek to break up the Donovan Report into a number of separate aspects. It is practically certain to co-operate with those elements in the Trades Union Congress who favour the setting up of an Industrial Relations Commission, despite all the restrictive measures it will seek to impose on the unions in the interest of the monopolies.

This would be a mistake infinitely more lethal than the disastrous acceptance of incomes policy which has so adversely affected trade union membership. The operations of the Industrial Relations Commission could virtually wreck the trade union movement. All union members must work to keep the trade unions clear of this strait-jacket, so that the powers of their organisations in the factories and in industry can be built up to wage the most effective struggle to win concessions now, while co-operating with all other progressive organisations completely to challenge the rule of monopoly capitalism.

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Marxism and Education

Brian Simon

This article is written up from the notes of the lecture given by Brian Simon opening the Discussion Conference on "Marxism and Education," held earlier this year under the auspices of the Marx Memorial Library. The author is Professor of Education at the Leicester University School of Education. He is also a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party.

I WANT to start by saying a few words on Marxism; I shall then talk briefly about the history of education—the changing relations between education and society, the process of education and the implications of the Marxist approach for some aspects of education and psychology. Finally, I should like to open up a few current questions in education, in the belief that these can most fruitfully be discussed in the light of the preceding analysis.

I. SOME ASPECTS OF MARXISM

First, then, a few points about Marxism itself. I think, in the context of this discussion, it is best to see Marxism as a world outlook—an outlook that is essentially sociological in the true meaning of the term. Marx himself set out to interpret changes in institutions and ideas, indeed to interpret social evolution as a whole, in terms of the changing characteristics of society itself, and particularly of production. It is for this reason that Lenin characterised Marx as "the first scientific sociologist." Marx sought the origin of change in society itself, and rejected any explanation in terms of external or supernatural forces.

Further, Marxism is not a contemplative philosophy—it leads those who accept it to action. Among the Theses on Feuerbach is the famous statement: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in different ways. The point, however, is to *change* it."

Then again it is important to understand that Marxism is not a "system," purporting a universal explanation of phenomena, and imposed, as it were, from outside. On the contrary, the main tenets of Marxism, indeed the Marxist outlook as a whole, is derived from the study of natural and social phenomena. In this sense Marxism can be equated with science.

Another term for Marxism is, of course, dialectical materialism. The dialectical view does not regard things (phenomena) as separate and independent entities with certain given attributes. On

the contrary, dialectics looks at *processes*—at the interconnections and inter-relationships of things. The dialectical view regards phenomena (whether social or natural) as constantly subject to change, *in dependence upon* the surrounding conditions. It seeks to find the origin and cause of change—since only so can phenomena be understood; it finds the active force of change in internal contradiction. It follows that to understand the process of social change, historical analysis is absolutely necessary. In this sense the Marxist approach stands in contrast with some trends in modern sociology, which seek to understand society by analysing only the existing situation.

So much for dialectics. In its materialist aspect, Marxism seeks to take a strictly scientific approach to phenomena. As is well known, Marxism holds that matter is primary, consciousness secondary and derivative. Marxism does not accept any supernatural or "idealist" explanation of human or natural phenomena as having validity. In the Marxist view the brain consists of matter which, through the process of evolution, has developed the capacity for thought. In adopting this position, Marxism stands directly in the line of the classic English materialist philosophers, from Francis Bacon, through Hobbes, Locke and Joseph Priestley, as also of the French Encyclopaedists of the mid-late eighteenth century (Diderot, Helvétius, etc.).

Historical Materialism

I should like to give two examples to indicate the Marxist approach—its application. The first concerns historical materialism. The present social-economic formation in Western Europe is characterised by Marxists as capitalism, but this form of social organisation has not, of course, always existed. On the contrary, capitalism as a social-economic formation emerged from feudalism, which was characterised by a different pattern of social relations. Further, in the Marxist view, capitalism itself will, at some future date, be superseded by a different social-economic formation, socialism. Indeed, this transition has already been made in the

Soviet Union and in parts of Europe and elsewhere. Socialism itself, will, in the Marxist view, give way to Communism, again at some stage in the future. Nor do Marxists suppose that Communism necessarily provides the final form of social organisation.

The motive force for social change the Marxist finds in the contradiction between the level of development of the productive forces on the one hand, and the relations of production (social relations) on the other. This contradiction, which intensifies with the development of the productive forces, expresses itself historically in the form of a struggle between different social classes. It was a struggle of this kind which led to the English Revolution of 1640 to 1660, and to the French Revolution of 1789. Such revolutions were bourgeois revolutions, ushering in a new social-economic formation—capitalism. In Russia the bourgeois revolution was taken a stage further in the proletarian revolution of October 1917. In this case the socialist revolution laid the basis, or made possible, a new social-economic formation—socialism.

The Individual

The second example of Marxist thinking concerns the individual rather than society as a whole. In the Marxist view it is not rewarding, in the study of individual development, to isolate the individual from society—or to isolate “bits” of the individual from the individual as a whole—and in so doing to believe that it is possible to arrive at the individual’s “essence.” This approach leads to a bogus or pseudo-psychology. To give a child a test in mathematics, for instance, and to conclude from the result that the child has a given level of “mathematical ability”; to explain this in terms of the child’s hereditary endowment, is hardly a scientific procedure from the standpoint of Marxism. On the contrary, the Marxist would tend to take the view that, whatever the child’s initial endowment, his mind is *formed in dependence upon* his conditions of life; mental abilities, in other words, have an historical formation.

This standpoint is opposed to that which underlay the mental testing movement of the 1920s and 1930s and later. The method of testing set up a kind of “man in general,” against which every individual was measured. The mental characteristics of “man in general” were embodied in the questions which made up the particular intelligence test used. These tests explored only one particular aspect (or “bit”) of the child’s thinking. This entire method of approach is suspect to the Marxist who would tend to take a different approach to this vital problem. Since human abilities are subject to a historical formation, the task of psychology is seen to be that of penetrating into the *process* of formation of

these abilities, in an attempt to discover the laws governing their formation. Marxists, in other words, would tend to adopt a genetic (“from the beginning”), or developmental, approach. This, the Marxist would hold, would be the scientific approach to the study of these and related problems of human development.

These two examples are given simply to indicate the kind of orientation that Marxism gives to the solution of human and social problems. The Marxist approach does not in itself provide the answers, but it promotes a way of looking at things, a method of approach, a standpoint from which, as it were, to start one’s investigation in any given field.

In my view, Marxism has a lot to contribute to our understanding of education, and of different areas of education. I propose therefore, to raise some of these issues, and range rather broadly across the subject matter.

II. EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Marxism can throw considerable light on the changing relations between education, on the one hand, and social-economic formations on the other. Indeed, I would hold that the nature of education at any given moment or period can only be understood in terms of the specific social conditions in which it takes place. This is true of the changing structure or forms of education, of its content, its methodology, and of many other aspects of the educational process.

Perhaps I could give a few examples to indicate what I mean:

Division of Education

(i) The first is of general significance, but must be put briefly. The division of labour first arose when, through social productive labour, men first produced a surplus over and above what was needed for bare subsistence. At this stage, as Marx showed, the surplus was appropriated by one section of society and there developed on the one hand a propertied leisure class—the ruling class—and on the other hand a slave class, which possessed no property. Society was thus early divided into those with property and those without property, those who ruled and those who were ruled, those who were leisured, and those who worked. The division of labour was, then, the obverse of the coming into being of private property. In this sense the entire history of society is a history of class-divided society, the slave class giving place to the serfs of feudalism, and the worker of capitalism.

It is not difficult to see that this dichotomy, or division, has affected the whole nature of education

in class society. In this situation, as Marx showed in his early writings, the mass of the people suffer from a process of alienation. In *Capital*, Vol. 1, Marx analysed in detail the changing nature of the division of labour, and the fragmentation of man (as he put it) that resulted from it, particularly under conditions of modern industry. Of factory production, Marx quoted William Thompson, the Owenite economist, who wrote that in this situation:

"The man of knowledge and the productive labourer come to be widely divided from each other, and knowledge, instead of remaining the handmaid of labour in the hand of the labourer, to increase his productive powers . . . has almost everywhere arrayed itself against labour . . . systematically deluding them and leading them (the labourers) astray in order to render their muscular powers entirely mechanical and obedient." (*Capital*, Vol. 1, p. 355.)

Of the division of labour in the period of manufacture, when the productive process was first split up into innumerable detailed operations, Marx wrote that this "converts the labourer into a crippled monstrosity, by forcing his detail dexterity at the expense of a world of productive capabilities and instincts . . . the individual himself is made the automatic motor of a fractional operation." *Modern industry*, wrote Marx, converts the workman into "a living appendage of the machine." Such work, he added, "does away with the many-sided play of the muscles, and confiscates every atom of freedom, both in bodily and intellectual activity." (*ibid.*, pp. 354, 489.)

This division between intelligence on the one hand, and practical work on the other, an essential aspect of the division of labour, has clearly been reflected in education throughout history. On the one hand there has developed an "academic" or theoretical education, fit for the leisured class. On the other, a practical education, for centuries conducted largely "on the job," or through apprenticeship, for the working class. This division is reflected in the educational institutions provided—the grammar and public schools on the one hand, the board schools, elementary schools, and now secondary modern schools on the other, the one catering for a small minority, the other for the masses. This division is also reflected in the division between theory and practice, and in similar ways. It is this division, the Marxist would hold, which vitiates education in class society—concentration on the abstract, the academic on the one hand, on the practical on the other, makes impossible the provision of an all-round cohesive education for the one class or the other. In class society, however, this division cannot be overcome—it underlies all educational development in contemporary society.

Revolutionary Periods

(ii) For a second example we may turn to revolutionary periods, since these indicate with striking clarity how the structure and content of education—indeed its general diffusion—changes with the changing relations of social classes.

The Marxist is naturally interested in moments of rapid social transformation, since these bring out very clearly the nature of the relations of education with society, as well as the relations between ideological and institutional change—that is, the relation between ideas and social change.

At such periods, what has often been a long—sometimes a very long—period of fermentation (or ingestation), *suddenly* appears in the light of day. In the case of the English Revolution, for instance, circumstances demanded a rethinking of almost every aspect of educational theory and practice. With the abolition of deans and chapters, indeed of the entire administrative and structural basis of the Church of England, the administrative basis of many educational institutions required to be re-formed. The ideological basis for the new ideas which now came to the fore is to be found in the works of Francis Bacon, with his belief in science and the scientific method, and his conviction that science must be applied, as he put it "to the relief of man's estate." It was this outlook that tied in tightly with Puritanism so that the Puritan movement as a whole was profoundly sympathetic to education and to its development. At the same time the English Revolution brought with it an altogether new social-educational perspective, and it was this perspective that was embodied and put forward in the writings of men like John Milton, Samuel Hartlib, and the group surrounding the latter.

A large number of educational tracts were published, of which Milton's was only one, and in many ways was not the most significant. It is impossible here to do justice to the richness of the ideas then put forward and discussed, to the advanced nature of the thinking they embodied, especially in relation to science and technology, or to the many schemes put forward for the advancement of education and science. At the same time different groupings put forward schemes for the general diffusion of education, for the provision of schools, colleges and universities, while Parliament itself prepared schemes for educational development. If social conditions did not permit the actual realisation of new institutions on any considerable scale, and if the Restoration of 1660 put paid to the most radical schemes and ideas, the English Revolution provides a striking example of the close connection between educational ideas and institutions and social change. Many of these ideas were, in fact, brought into practice in the Dissenting Academies set up after

1660 and now began to form part of the English tradition.

We find a similar situation, if on a higher level, at the time of the French Revolution. Here also, ideas which had long fermented burst into the light of day, and here also new institutions were set up which reflected the ideas and interests of the revolutionary classes. In France also the administrative structure of the educational system was disrupted, so that the revolutionary forces were impelled to think in terms of building anew. The French Convention promoted a whole series of radical educational plans, from that of Condorcet to that of Lakanal, and debated education passionately and at considerable length. In the provinces the Collèges Centraux were established which reflected a new scientific approach to education in sharp contrast to the schools of the past; a scholarship system was developed to allow the poorest to rise (on the principle of equality). Here also, when the revolution had been carried through, its consolidation in the interests of the bourgeoisie involved a turn against the most radical plans and institutions that had developed—this seems a law of all bourgeois revolutions.

As in France, so in Russia. Just as the Encyclopaedists had provided the ideological weapons of the bourgeoisie in France, so in Russia first the radical democrats of the mid-nineteenth century, and later the Marxists, provided the theoretical basis for the revolutionary movement. Among the revolutionary democrats, men like Herzen, Chernishovsky, Dobrolyubov were deeply concerned with education as with other social and cultural questions; the materialist tradition was carried on brilliantly by Sechenov, the forerunner of Pavlov. With the growth of the revolutionary movement Marxism achieved intellectual hegemony among the revolutionaries, and, with the revolution itself, education was given a new priority. The second decree to be issued by the revolutionary government of the Soviets in 1917 was a decree on education (the first was on peace). And here also education itself was transformed; the new schools of the young Soviet republic were developed on a new structure, with a new content of knowledge and with a new ethos. The Russian Revolution, of all those described, clearly involved the most radical change.

Social change—educational change; clearly the two are closely interlinked. At revolutionary periods we see this most clearly. Education is not a “thing in itself.” To be understood it must be studied *in its dependence* on the surrounding conditions. Nor does it merely reflect social change. At certain times it can become a force bringing about change; at others, preserving the *status quo*.

Class Forces and Educational Change

(iii) For an example as to how changes in the structure and content of education, indeed of its ethos generally, are determined by the changing relations of class forces, we may look at the situation in England towards the close of the eighteenth century.

The famous “Lunar Society” at Birmingham was the prototype of several groupings which developed in the main provincial cities at this time. This society, which included such men as James Watt, Matthew Boulton, Erasmus Darwin and Joseph Priestley, reflected the outlook of the radical bourgeoisie of that time. Its links were with growing commerce and industry, but also with the professions (especially the medical profession). Profoundly concerned with the development of science as well as its application in technology, one of the most striking features of these groupings (in Manchester, Birmingham and elsewhere) was their deep interest in education.

Four of the members of the Lunar Society (so called because it met on the nights of the full moon) wrote important works on education (Edgeworth, Day, Darwin and Priestley). These works reflected the outlook of these groupings, and were remarkable in that they put forward an all-round, cohesive conception of education, comprising humanist and scientific subjects together with technology. They were also concerned to develop a fully secular basis for moral education. The parallel group in Manchester, who set up the famous Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, established two educational institutions reflecting their outlook, the most interesting being the Manchester College of Arts and Sciences, a forerunner of Manchester University. The outlook of these groupings, particularly that of the Lunar Society, represented a development of the progressive ideas first put forward at the time of the English Revolution in the seventeenth century. They represented the radical, democratic tradition, both politically and educationally.

What is illuminating is to trace what happened to this tradition and outlook over the succeeding decades. The educational spokesmen of the industrial and commercial middle classes in the 1830s were the Utilitarians, the followers of Bentham and James Hill. This group was also much concerned with education, as well as with politics, industry and commerce. But, compared with the Lunar Society, the educational purposes and programmes of the Utilitarians were narrowed. Education must be subordinated to the immediately useful—only those subjects should be taught which would be of immediate use in the business of earning a living. Hence literature, music, the arts were to be excluded. Further, the Utilitarians were concerned to develop

one type of education for the middle classes, and another quite different type of education for the labouring class. How are we to explain this narrowing of purposes, this distortion of the radical tradition in education?

This is a matter that needs more detailed analysis than can be given here. However, briefly, we may note that the intervening years (1790 to 1830) saw the rapid growth of industry and especially of factory production, and therefore of a factory proletariat. As sharp class divisions became established as a result of technological developments, education became divided against itself, overtly serving a class function, and therefore narrowed in its scope and character. The radical bourgeois tradition in education, with its all-sided humanism—a conception which was appropriate to the most advanced section of the bourgeoisie in the late eighteenth century, could no longer be maintained. Instead we find that these purposes and this outlook is now taken over by the working class, which, as it develops as a class through struggle, begins to establish its own specific educational aspirations and objectives. These, in turn, are well expressed in, for instance, William Lovett's *Chartism*, a book written in jail after the Birmingham Bull Ring riots in 1839. Here Lovett shows himself to be in the tradition of the educators of the Commonwealth period, and of those of the Lunar Society fifty years earlier. This outlook, as developed and taken further by Lovett, now express the interests and aspirations of the working class, concerned to bring about a total transformation of society. It is worth noting that most of the textbooks in the history of education, if they refer to Lovett at all, describe him as being "ahead of his time." They fail to see that Lovett was in no sense ahead of his time. It is true that many of his educational ideas have not yet been implemented; but these ideas are interesting and significant precisely because they reflected the outlook and interests of the working class at the time of the Chartist movement.

I have attempted to analyse the relations between educational change and the changing balance of class forces during this period elsewhere (*Studies in the History of Education, 1780 to 1870*). An analysis of this kind—in terms of the balance of class forces—is as appropriate for the situation today as it is for the past; even if the overall position is, perhaps, more complex than in the period I have discussed. Thus it remains true that the structure of the educational system, as well as its overall content, is determined, in the last resort, by the interests and outlook of the dominant class. This is true of any country, whether capitalist or socialist. In the capitalist countries the ruling social forces attempt to contain the development of education—in essence to allow

only so much education as is necessary to them for a variety of reasons. However, a simplified analysis along these lines is not of great value, since education remains an area of struggle, and is best seen in this light.

In this country, for instance, the working class has conducted a long and often bitter struggle for education—this has taken different forms at different times. The struggle has had its successes—concessions have been won, and the history of education can be interpreted along these lines. But in addition a certain level of educational development has been seen as essential to the capitalist class as a means of maintaining its own hegemony, both in relation to the extension of the franchise and the development of "democracy," and in relation to imperialist rivalry which has consistently required higher levels of education, particularly in science and technology. All these and other factors have to be taken into consideration in any overall assessment today. Hence the complexity of the situation. Nevertheless, the opposition of class interests expresses itself in education in very many ways; in terms, for instance, of the structure of the educational system (e.g. public schools, the bipartite system), in terms also of the content of education, even of methods of teaching and of teacher-pupil relations. It is at any rate abundantly clear that in a class-divided society, the conditions for the full and many-sided development of personality for the mass of the citizens, cannot exist.

The introduction of socialism, on the other hand, lays the basis for bringing the class struggle, and class divisions to an end. With the abolition of private property, socialism provides the conditions for bringing to an end the basic division of labour referred to earlier, and so of overcoming the dichotomy between mental and manual labour. It also lays the basis for bringing education into direct connection with every aspect of life, making possible an entirely new approach to the all-round development of personality, and, indeed, giving this conception itself new dimensions. This is the humanist perspective of Marxists—it embodies the purposes for which Marxists strive.

III. MARXISM AND THE PROCESS OF EDUCATION

As I suggested earlier, the Marxist approach casts light on the process of education itself. I should first like to say a few words as to how Marxists understand how humanity itself has changed and developed.

How Man Changes

(i) In the process of social productive labour, man developed both speech and the ability to use

tools. It is not by chance that one relatively large area of the brain is related to the movements of the tongue, while another is related to movements of the thumb. It has been said that "the hand informs the brain, which in turn informs the hand," and this phrase sums up the dialectical relations between thought and activity. As man developed speech and language, so he developed consciousness. "Language is as old as consciousness," wrote Marx, "language is practical consciousness . . . for language, like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity, of intercourse with other men. Consciousness is therefore from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men exist at all." (*German Ideology*, p. 19.)

It is from this type of analysis that the Marxist conception of the unity of consciousness and activity is derived—as the key to understanding the nature of human change. In changing nature, wrote Marx and Engels, man changes himself. This kernel of Marx's thought was developed in his critique of the outlook of the mechanical materialists of the late eighteenth century. In his *Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx noted, in reference to Robert Owen's doctrines, that "the materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and education forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that the educator must himself be educated. . . . The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can only be comprehended and rationally understood as *revolutionary practice*."

Robert Owen, who reflected the outlook of the eighteenth-century mechanical materialists, held the view, as he frequently reiterated, that "Circumstances Make Men." In this view, man is regarded as the passive product of external stimuli, which, as it were, constantly impact on him and form him. This standpoint was certainly a liberating one at that time; it gave, for instance, immense importance to humanising man's surroundings, the role of education and environment in transforming man's character and outlook—leading directly to Owenite millenarianism, to the conception of the perfectibility of man, if his external environment could be controlled and planned on humanist principles. Nevertheless, this mechanist view did not allow in any way for the "self-activity" of the individual. It did not allow the individual power to transform his environment, to change it. Instead, man was seen as the passive product of external circumstances.

It was this mechanistic (or determined) aspect of materialism that Marx criticised in his famous Thesis, which stresses the dialectical inter-relationship between man and his environment, explaining human development in terms of this active two-way interpenetration, so allowing scope for human

activity (or "self-activity"). The essential component of change, as Marx saw it, was practice—"revolutionary practice"—practice which both changes man's external circumstances and changes himself. In the *Dialectics of Nature*, Engels makes much the same point when he writes:

"Natural science, like philosophy, has hitherto entirely neglected the influence of men's activity on their thought; both only know nature on the one hand and thought on the other. But it is precisely *the alteration of nature by men*, and not solely nature as such, which is the most essential and immediate basis of human thought, and it is in the measure that man has learned to change nature that his intelligence has increased." (p. 172.)

The mechanical "two-factor" theory—that man is formed by heredity on the one hand, and an unchanging "environment" on the other, cannot explain how human beings have evolved from ape to man—able to reach for the stars. If this theory were correct, man could never have evolved beyond the ape. In the Marxist view, on the other hand, man literally makes himself (the title of Gordon Childe's famous book). He has made himself by changing his circumstances, by penetrating ever more deeply into the laws of nature, so that his thought reflects these laws, so making himself master of nature. Man is master of nature in so far as he understands, obeys, and utilises the laws of nature—freedom is the recognition of necessity.

(ii) What are the implications of this approach for education and psychology? Here again it is possible only to touch on some of the main issues.

Speech and Mental Development

(a) What is specific to human beings—as opposed to the animal world generally—is speech, language. Speech gives the power of generalisation and abstraction, a power that is denied to the animals. To give an example, the young child is presented by his mother with a cup and at the same time the mother says the word "cup." To the child at this point the word "cup" is associated with this particular cup and with no other. But quite soon the child "meets" other cups, and each time this word is used. In course of time he comes to realise that the word "cup" denotes all cups, of whatever colour, shape and size. The word generalises the main features of all cups (i.e. that they hold water, can be drunk from, etc.), abstracting the inessential features of each. When he uses the word, therefore, the child is already exercising the power of generalisation and abstraction.

Through the use of speech man is able to master the whole social-historical experience of man "accumulated . . . through thousands of years of history," as Professor Luria puts it. Luria goes on:

"When the child says to the mother: 'What's that?' and the mother answers: 'It is an engine' and explains how it works, the child masters what has been achieved by the work of many generations. When in school the child learns reading, writing, counting and the fundamentals of science, he masters social-human experience, of which he could not master a millionth part were his whole development determined only by the experience he gains in direct interaction with the environment. It is through verbal generalisation that the child acquires a new factor in development—the mastery of social-human experience—and this quickly becomes the basic factor in the formation of his mind." (Brian Simon and Joan Simon, *Educational Psychology in the USSR*, p. 85.)

Speech, then, is central to mental development. Luria stresses not only its generalising function, but also that language itself becomes a source of thought: "When the child masters language he gains the potentiality to organise anew his perception, his memory; he masters more complex forms of reflection of objects in the external world; he gains the capacity to draw conclusions from his observations, to make deductions, the potentiality of thinking" (*ibid*). Speech activity also serves another important function. Through the use of speech the child learns to regulate his own actions—to form images of future actions, and so consciously to regulate his own behaviour. It is evident, then, that speech is of central importance in the formation of man's mental processes.

Formative Power of Education

(b) Secondly, Marxism analyses the child's education as a *process* taking place in the specific conditions of his life. In the case of any particular child, these conditions include the family and home, the school, the groups out of school with whom the child comes into contact (peer groups), as well as the particular country in which the child lives, with its particular level of socio-economic and technological development. These headings briefly encompass the conditions in which the child lives and develops. All must be taken into account in the interpretation of development.

Whatever may be the child's original endowment, in terms, for instance, of the structure of his higher nervous system, the child's particular abilities, his capacity for carrying through specific mental operations of various kinds, are formed in the process of his education, and of his life generally. Such is the conclusion of psychologists orientated by Marxism as well as through scientific investigation. I refer here primarily to Soviet psychologists—Luria, Leontiev, Galperin, and many others. These see the task of psychology, as I mentioned at the start of this paper, as being to discover how

human abilities, skills, mental operations, etc. are formed (particularly cognitive abilities)—to find out what the components of a given ability are. The task of the educationalist follows from this—it is, by applying psychological knowledge in the process of education, actually to form the abilities required in their pupils.

Thus Marxists deny the fixed and determining influence of innate characteristics (or "factors of the mind") and instead place the emphasis on *the formative power of education*. In taking up this position, based on science, Marxism is once again in the direct line of descent of outstanding educators and philosophers of the past who also stressed the formative, and even the transforming power of education; for instance, Erasmus in the sixteenth century, Locke in the seventeenth, Joseph Priestley in the eighteenth, Robert Owen and James Mill in the nineteenth centuries. This is again the tradition of English materialist philosophy. It was this materialism that was developed in his investigation of reflex action and the higher mental processes by Sechenov in the mid-nineteenth century in Russia, and which formed the basis of Pavlov's approach to the investigation of the higher nervous system through the formation of conditional reflexes, as well as to Pavlov's own formulations as to the role of language, the "second signalling system" of his later work, on which he placed enormous emphasis.

On this theoretical base has arisen the extraordinarily wide ranging research in the Soviet Union on the psychology of learning. As a result of work done at the Institute of Psychology in Moscow, and by other organisations, the question as to how the child learns, the stages through which learning proceeds, and the conditions necessary for its success, have been thoroughly investigated over the last three decades, both in relation to particular subjects and skills, and in relation to the development of a general theory of learning. This research is closely connected to practice—the practice of teaching. This outlook, which stresses the formative power of education is the main principle behind the organisation and character of the Soviet School. Hence from the age of seven to fifteen there is no streaming nor selection in the normal schools. The normal child, it is held, is capable of mastering the syllabus given satisfactory teaching. The task of psychology is to assist this process by providing a scientific foundation for the rational organisation of teaching and learning.

Relevance of Marxism

(c) In concluding this section it may be said that, in the present confusion both about the study of education, and about the relations between theory

and practice in education, Marxism can make a considerable contribution. It can make this contribution because it represents a co-ordinated approach to education according to canons which have been publicly stated. This approach covers the most crucial questions with which the study of education is concerned—for instance, that of the relation between ideas and action, between consciousness and activity, between ideological and institutional change, between educational and social change. The Marxist approach, as I hope I have indicated, is relevant not only to the study of the history of education, but also to psychology; not only to sociology, but also to philosophy, all of which today are closely concerned with education.

The Marxist approach is relevant to all these aspects of education for one main reason—because Marxism, as a philosophical outlook, is basically concerned both with the individual and with the social formation of men. In an important sense, that is what Marxism is about. Marxism is concerned not only with man's past and with his present, but also with his future, embodying a perspective for human development, with bringing about the conditions where men may develop what Marx called their "slumbering powers." It is therefore no accident that Marxism has a particular relevance to education, to the *process* of human formation and social change.

IV. SOME CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN EDUCATION

We may turn now, if briefly, to the current scene. My aim here is to open questions for discussion, in the light of Marxism. How then, do we interpret the present phase? What has Marxism to offer to the theory and practice of education today?

The fundamental division in contemporary society remains that between the propertied on the one hand, and the propertyless on the other. A small class of monopoly capitalists owns and controls a large proportion of the wealth of the country. On the other hand the vast mass of the population owns little or nothing but their labour power. Between the two lie various "middle strata": teachers, scientists, small business men, shop-owners, etc. whose interests are increasingly identified with those of the majority of the population.

The educational system bears all the marks of the class-divided society with which it is inextricably related. A simple analysis indicates the position. A special, segregated education is available for the small minority including specific élite schools which play a special role in the social process—these are the public schools including schools like Eton, Harrow, Winchester. The élitist structure of higher

education also reflects this situation, with Oxford and Cambridge playing a special role as seminaries for the ruling class, through the modern universities, to colleges of education and technical colleges at the lower end of the hierarchy. On the other hand we have, for the mass of the population, the secondary modern schools and, parallel with these, grammar schools whose function has been to recruit "ability" from the lower social levels to lubricate the functioning of an increasingly complex society.

In this situation Marxism underlines the need for revolutionary social change, the transformation of the form of social organisation from capitalism to socialism. This, of course, is the programme of the Communist Party, the strategy and tactics of which are set out in its programme, *The British Road to Socialism*.

But, while pursuing this political aim, Marxists working in the field of education are also directly involved in changing the actual situation as it exists in education today, in opening up, for a greater proportion of the people, "the chance to be men." They are, therefore, necessarily involved in the day-to-day issues which confront teachers and educationalists generally and cannot ignore them. On the contrary, in the long run, the fight on specific issues merges with the general struggle to bring about an overall social transformation.

Against Streaming

A key educational issue over the last ten or twenty years has been the fight to bring to an end early selection and differentiation in the educational system. We should note here the almost impregnable system that was built up in the 1940s and 1950s in defence of the sharply divided, differentiated structure, whose basis was laid early in the century. This "system," comprising different types of secondary school parallel with each other, found its justification in theories about the nature of the child, in particular in theories which stressed, and claimed to have proved, the fixed and determined nature of inborn mental capacities in human beings. This justification of the system seemed to be borne out in practice; what few realised was that the results of the system were determined by its structure—that the system as a whole was, therefore, self-verifying.

It was this "system" that Marxists criticised, both in its theory and in its practice, the two forms of criticism supporting each other. A critique was carried through of the whole theory of "intelligence" as embodied in the "science" of psychometry. The basic, and fatalistic assumptions on which this theory rested were brought out into the light of day, and an alternative theory put forward concerning

human learning which stressed the formative power of education. The formulation of this outlook owed a great deal to the work of psychologists in the Soviet Union.

At the same time, teachers, influenced by Marxist thinking and analysis, as well as their own experience of teaching and educating in the schools, now began to reject the ideology underlying and justifying the highly-streamed and differentiated system that had developed. In the early 1950s the first pioneer secondary modern schools, against all official and psychological advice but putting their faith in the power of education and in the abilities of their pupils, began to enter those who wished for the GCE examinations. The success of this enterprise astonished everyone. At the same time pioneer junior schoolteachers who also rejected the ideology of mental testing, again acting against official advice of long standing, deliberately un-streamed their schools in order to avoid making early distinctions between children based on unscientific evidence. Their aim was to create a new educational environment for all their pupils.

These and other developments gave impetus to the whole movement for the comprehensive school, for the development of a single school at the secondary stage which would avoid the necessity to make early distinctions between children, and also create a new educational environment for all the children. But it would be naive not to realise that the struggle against ideas and practice that reflect divided (class) interests continues within the comprehensive school itself. In this situation the standpoint of the Marxist remains clear. If education has the formative power that modern psychology suggests, and if the individual child's development takes place in dependence on the conditions of his life and activity, then early differentiation of pupils within the comprehensive school according to tests of his *present* level of development cannot be justified. To do so is to orientate the child's education, as Vigotski puts it, on the child's "yesterday," while what is important is what Vigotski defined as his "zone of potential development." The former method has been described by Vigotski as follows:

"We try, with the help of tests, to determine the level of the child's mental development and this the educator must regard as a limit which the child cannot transcend. This way of presenting the question involved the idea that teaching must be orientated to the yesterday of the child's development, to the stage already accomplished." *"The only good teaching,"* Vigotski adds, *"is that which outpaces development."* (*Educational Psychology in the USSR*, p. 30-31.)

It is for reasons of this kind that Marxists welcome the movement towards non-streaming in comprehensive schools, and indeed regard this development

as an essential aspect of the unification of secondary education. The key question here is what forms of grouping should take the place of the "prismatic" streaming of the past? This is a point to which I shall return.

Questions Arising

(i) The breakdown of the ideology of mental testing, which had an answer to every question, and which acted as a strong inhibitor of educational inquiry, has opened up all the most crucial questions of education. Let us turn for a moment to the primary school. The abolition of the eleven plus in some areas of the country has liberated many of these schools from the supposed necessity of rigid streaming and its concomitant traditional forms of class teaching and cramming for the examination, at any rate in the A streams. The move towards non-streaming, which has accompanied the ending of the eleven plus, has, of course, had an overall positive effect, but it would be wrong not to realise that it has, in many cases, been accompanied by confusion as to direction, especially as regards the structuring of activities in the more freely organised classroom. Indeed, so wide is the variety of practice, that junior schools today could be arranged in a continuum from the rigidly streamed, structured type of school relying almost entirely on traditional forms of class teaching (the children hardly active) to a more or less completely unstructured system sometimes veering on anarchy. Within these two extremes junior school classrooms could be arranged, probably on a variety of dimensions, according to the degree of structured or unstructured activities of the pupils. One striking feature of the present stage is how little in fact we know in any systematic or objective way as to what goes on in classrooms up and down the country. In this situation a number of questions arise, to which we need answers, especially if we are concerned, as we must be, with the educational development of working-class children in the new situation. Some of these appear to us to be as follows:

- (i) How should the activities of children be structured in order to maximise their learning; both in general and in relation to particular content areas?
- (ii) What qualities of mind do we wish to develop in our pupils, and how can this development best be fostered?
- (iii) How should class teaching, group and individual work, be combined in order to realise the teacher's objectives?
- (iv) How effective is group work and activities in different subject areas, what kind of groups are most effective for what purposes? What sort of tasks and problems should be set to groups?

- (v) To what extent should the structuring of children's activities follow the logic of the subject (e.g. in mathematics, science)? In what areas of knowledge is it important that concepts should be deliberately formed and sequentially mastered?
- (vi) How can children be motivated to carry through activities, and how can this motivation be maintained in different circumstances?
- (vii) What are the implications of our understanding of the importance of language for primary school education? And how far must conceptual development be actively and carefully fostered in the case of each individual child?
- (viii) How can the teacher, with a class of, say, forty children, effectively assess the level of development of each child in the relatively unstructured situation of today? What instruments does she need for this purpose, and what forms of recording can be used?

These are some of the questions which, I suggest, ought now to be asked, questions for which it is important to begin to formulate answers. Such questions cannot in any sense be answered only from the theoretical angle. To find the answers, we need to base ourselves on *practice*, on what can be learned from the actual situation in the classroom, on the practice of the teachers who are immediately involved. In particular, we need today to develop methods of observing and recording, and then analysing, the different forms of activity—of classroom structuring—which now obtain in the classrooms, and of relating these differences to differences in cognitive and effective gains. Technically, such research is now possible (with the aid of videotape recordings and radio microphones).

School Organisation

(ii) As far as secondary education is concerned the comprehensive school presents a new situation, in which the grammar-modern dichotomy is *formally* overcome (perhaps it is more realistic to say that it has been transferred inside the single school). But it would be wrong not to see that the comprehensive school does make possible new opportunities for advance. The comprehensive school is *neither* a grammar school *nor* a modern school. It is true that the transition to comprehensive education is by no means universal, indeed these still represent a small minority of all secondary schools. It is also true that many of the plans accepted by the DES are only partially "comprehensive," in that grammar and independent schools of various kinds will still continue to exist alongside the new comprehensive schools as they come into being. But that the issue

of Circular 10/65 marked the beginning of an overall transition to comprehensive education cannot be denied.

Yet, while the comprehensive school marks a step towards the unification of secondary education, various forces continue, as we would expect, to reinforce differentiation between children within the single school. This is noticeable in the whole curriculum reform movement which has reached considerable dimensions in the last few years, particularly under the aegis of the Nuffield Foundation and the Schools Council. Here we note, in a new guise, the tripartite division of the past, and it is not difficult to analyse its historical determinants. The Nuffield science projects, which originated some years ago, and certainly before the movement to comprehensive education had gathered way, is specifically directed to GCE, O and A level syllabuses, and was originally worked out in terms of the top 10 per cent of pupils on the "intelligence" scale. Then we have the curriculum renewal projects, connected with the CSE examinations and syllabuses for the middle group, and, more recently, the various projects designed for the "school leavers." These three levels correspond to a rough occupational grouping in society at large, but this whole approach is foreign to the conception of educability outlined earlier and must be rejected.

The Marxist concept of educability, of the formative power of education, leads to a different concept of education and of the internal structuring of the school than that embodied in the old tripartite system, or in the newer theories underlying the curriculum renewal movement. This is not to deny that there are some very positive features of this new movement, at each of the levels with which it is concerned; it is simply to reiterate, in the new context, the essential falsity of the approach underlying the movement from an educational point of view. This Marxist concept leads to the idea of the school as a social organisation which is not structured according to the supposed level of "ability" of the pupils, but is specifically structured to *promote* education, learning, change, in its pupils. This leads to the conclusion, already referred to, that non-streaming must be a basic principle of organisation of the comprehensive school, and that what is required is a fundamental re-thinking of the curriculum in terms of contemporary individual and social needs. Such re-thinking needs to be informed by knowledge of the learning process, and this implies once again the need for much more research into this process. Educational psychology has as yet made little contribution to teaching in the secondary schools of this country.

One caveat: it is important that the move towards new forms of grouping in the secondary school

should not be made in a doctrinaire manner. Teachers themselves can only operate effectively in a system the value and practicability of which they are themselves personally convinced, not only theoretically but in terms of practice, and this includes their own practice. We are at present in a stage of discussion and experiment as regards school organisation. This is valuable and must surely be encouraged. In this discussion those who hold views similar to those outlined here will put their point of view. They will be the ones who lead experiments, who try out new approaches, and who win their colleagues to participate. The organisation, character and purpose of the early stages of the comprehensive school (the eleven to fourteen age range) is now being widely debated. It is at this stage that new advances can be made.

V. CONCLUSION

The historical significance of Marxism is that it brought a new hope and a new perspective for man.

It not only "made sense" (if I can put it that way) of social evolution, it also pointed the way to the transformation of society so that men could realise

their "slumbering powers" (as Marx put it), free themselves from social and economic factors that constrict their development, and control their own future.

Lenin, and the early Bolsheviks who assimilated this theory, applied it brilliantly to the specific conditions of Russia, and were able to bring about a social transformation of historic significance. In the Soviet Union, industrial and technological change, based on science, was from the first linked to a massive effort in education, which was seen as crucial for the future. The Russian revolutionaries showed, against all the prophecies, that you *can* educate people, transform them through educational and social change, and that it can be done quickly.

Belief in the power of education—that is one of the great contributions of Marxism. And this is of immense significance, not only for the problems with which Britain is faced, or in terms of inner school organisation in this country, but also today for the peoples of Asia, Africa and South America in particular. The example is already there. These peoples possess the human resources, with all their immense potentialities. It remains to release these potentialities through social change.

DOCUMENTS ON THE CZECHOSLOVAK SITUATION

I Joint Statement of Communist Parties of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union

The following joint Statement, following the talks between the Communist Parties of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, was issued on August 1st

A MEETING of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) Central Committee and the Praesidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was held in Cierna Nad Tisou from July 29th to August 1st, 1968.

The meeting was attended by: On the CPSU side: General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee L. I. Brezhnev, members of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee G. I. Voronov, A. N. Kosygin, K. T. Mazurov, A. Y. Pelshe, N. V. Podgorny, M. A. Suslov, A. N. Shelepin, P. E. Shelest; alternative members of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee P. N. Demichev and P. M. Masharov; secretaries of the

CPSU Central Committee K. F. Katushev and B. N. Ponomarev.

On the part of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia: First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia A. Dubcek, members of the Praesidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia F. Barbirek, V. Bilak, O. Cernik, D. Kolder, F. Kriegel, J. Piller, E. Rigo, J. Smrkovsky, J. Spacek, O. Svestka; alternative members of the Praesidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia A. Kapek, J. Lenart, B. Simon; the chairman of the Central Control and auditing commission M. Jakes, L. Svoboda, the president of the Czechoslovak Socialist

Republic, attended the meeting on the Czechoslovak side.

A broad comradely exchange of opinion on questions interesting both sides was held at the meeting. The participants in the meeting exchanged detailed information on the situation in their countries.

The meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and the Praesidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, which was held in an atmosphere of complete frankness, sincerity and mutual understanding, was aimed at the search for ways of further developing and strengthening the traditional friendly relations between our parties and peoples,

resting on their principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

During the talks both delegations, by mutual consent, resolved to address the Central Committee of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, and Poland, with a proposal on holding a multilateral comradely meeting. The aforesaid fraternal parties agreed with this proposal.

The meeting of representatives of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the Socialist Unity Party, the Polish United Workers' Party, the CPSU and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia will be held in Bratislava on August 3rd.

II The Bratislava Statement

The following is the text of the Statement issued on August 4th, signed by the representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Soviet Union, following their meeting at Bratislava on August 3rd, 1968.

PROCEEDING from the fact that the complicated international situation, the subversive actions of imperialism directed against peace and international security, against the cause of Socialism, call for still closer cohesion of the countries of the Socialist system, and also taking into consideration that the development of Socialism sets new tasks whose solution necessitates further pooling of efforts of Socialist States, the representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist countries found it necessary to call this conference in Bratislava.

In the spirit of obtaining traditions, in an atmosphere of complete frankness, adhesion to the principles and friendship, the fraternal Parties discussed urgent questions of the struggle for Socialism, further consolidation of the Socialist community, and cohesion of the world Communist movement.

Views were exchanged on the problems of the current international situation and the intensification of the struggle against imperialism.

The representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties discussed the ways for consolidation and promotion of fraternal co-operation of Socialist States.

In the years that have passed since the rout of fascism and the advent to power of the working class, the peoples of the European countries which have taken the road of Socialism scored victories in all spheres of public life.

In these years, the Parties overcoming difficulties and permanently improving their work ensured the creation of powerful industry in every Socialist

country and reorganisation of the life in the countryside; achieved steady growth of people's welfare and the flourishing of the national culture.

Millions of working people have been awakened to the conscious political life. The Soviet Union achieved particularly major successes in building Socialism and Communism. The international influence of Socialist States, their role in solving major problems of world politics has grown immeasurably.

Support, consolidation and protection of these gains achieved at a price of heroic efforts and selfless labour of every people is a common internationalist duty of all Socialist countries. Such is the unanimous opinion of all participants in the conference who expressed their unbending determinations to develop and defend the Socialist gains in their countries, to work for new achievements in Socialist construction.

On the basis of historical experience the fraternal Parties became convinced that it is possible to advance along the road of Socialism and Communism only by being strictly and consistently guided by the general laws of construction of Socialist society and, primarily by consolidating the leading role of the working class and its vanguard—the Communist Parties.

In so doing every fraternal Party, creatively solving the questions of further Socialist development, takes into consideration the national specific features and conditions.

Unbending loyalty to Marxism-Leninism, education of the popular masses in the spirit of the ideas of Socialism and proletarian internationalism,

irreconcilable struggle against bourgeois ideology, against all anti-Socialist forces, provide a guarantee of successes in consolidating the positions of Socialism and in rebuffing machinations of imperialism.

The fraternal Parties firmly and resolutely counterpose their unbreakable solidarity, their high vigilance, to any efforts of imperialism and also of all other anti-Communist forces to weaken the leading role of the working class and Communist Parties.

They will never allow anyone to drive a wedge between Socialist States, to undermine the foundations of the Socialist social system.

Fraternal friendship and cohesion in this direction are in line with vital interests of our peoples, constitute a reliable basis for solving socio-economic and political tasks on which the Communist Parties of our countries are working.

The fraternal Parties regard it as their duty to show unflagging concern for enhancing political activity of the working class, peasantry, intelligentsia, of all working people, for all-round progress of the Socialist social system, for further development of Socialist democracy, for improving the style and methods of the Party and Government work on the principles of democratic centralism.

The many-sided tasks of creating a Socialist society in each of our countries are easier to solve with mutual help and support.

Fraternal contacts expand and multiply the possibilities of every Socialist country.

The participants in the conference expressed their firm resolve to do everything in their power for deepening all-round co-operation of the countries on the basis of the principles of equality, respect for sovereignty and national independence, territorial integrity, fraternal mutual assistance and solidarity.

The Communist and Workers' Parties' attach primary importance to the efforts for further development of economy and improvement of material welfare of the working people by effectively exploiting the tremendous natural resources of our countries, by making use of the latest achievements of science and technology, by improving the forms and methods of Socialist management.

An effective way of attaining these noble aims is provided by the promotion of economic co-operation of Socialist countries on the bilateral and multilateral basis.

Further improvement of the activity of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance, development of co-operation and specialisation of production in Socialist countries, which enable fuller utilisation of the advantages of international Socialist division of labour, are acquiring an increasing importance.

In this connection, the urgency of calling a top-

level economic conference in the nearest future was confirmed once again.

The participants in the conference regard it as their duty to draw people's attention to the fact that the international situation in the recent period remains complex and dangerous as a result of the aggressive policy of imperialism.

In these conditions the fraternal Parties of Socialist countries proceeding from the interests of the struggle for consolidation of world peace and international security, for the organisation of a resolute rebuff to the aggressive policy of imperialism and for the establishment of the principles of peaceful co-existence of States with different social systems, again confirm their readiness to concert and co-ordinate their actions in the international arena.

The working class, peasantry, intelligentsia and all working people crave for peace and tranquillity for their countries, for all people of the world.

The Socialist countries have been, are and will be doing everything for the realisation of these cherished aspirations of the people.

Our Parties declare that in solving this noble task they will continue to co-operate with all Communist and Workers' Parties, with all progressive forces of the world in the struggle for world peace, freedom, independence, and social progress.

The Communist and Workers' Parties of Bulgaria, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia again solemnly declare their unbending determination to continue to support the heroic Vietnamese people, to render them necessary assistance in the just struggle against American invaders.

We are also concerned over the fact that the situation in the Middle East continues tense as the result of the aggressive policy of Israel's ruling circles.

Our Parties will do everything in their power to eliminate the consequences of the Israeli aggression on the basis of the resolution of the United Nations Security Council of November 22nd, 1967, and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied Arab territories.

The participants in the conference discussed the situation in Europe and point out that the growing activity of the forces of revanchism, militarism and neo-nazism in Western Germany directly affect the security of Socialist States and create a threat to the cause of world peace.

We shall continue to follow consistently a concerted policy in European affairs in line with the common interests of the Socialist countries and the interests of European security, to rebuff any attempts to revise the results of World War II and to break the frontiers that have taken shape in Europe.

We shall continue to insist on the invalidity of the Munich Agreement right from the beginning.

We shall continue to render resolute support to the German Democratic Republic—a Socialist State of German working people, defending the cause of peace.

We shall render permanent support to the Communist Party of Germany and to all forces which fight against militarism and revanchism, for democratic progress.

The Communist Parties of Socialist States express their determination to work for ensuring European security, confirm the principles of the Bucharest declaration and of the statement of the Karlovy Vary conference of European Communist and Workers' Parties, they are prepared to do everything necessary for calling a congress of the peoples of Europe in defence of peace on our Continent.

To prevent a violation of European peace is of decisive importance for preserving peace throughout the world. This is the goal, affecting the interests of all nations, toward which our joint efforts will be directed.

Now that the imperialist forces of the United States, the Federal German Republic and other countries demonstrate their aggressive activity, make persistent attempts to weaken the Socialist community, the representatives of the fraternal Parties deem it necessary to emphasise the particular significance of the Warsaw Treaty once again.

This treaty, concluded by Socialist States in reply to the fact that revanchist West Germany joined the aggressive imperialist bloc of Nato, has been and remains a powerful factor for peace and security of the European peoples.

This treaty raises an insurmountable obstacle for all those who would like to revise the results of World War II.

This treaty securely protects the gains of Socialism, the sovereignty and independence of the fraternal States.

This treaty is aimed at consolidating European security and preserving world peace.

The current situation demands from us unflinching efforts to enhance the defence potential of every Socialist State and of the whole Socialist community, to consolidate political and military co-operation within the Warsaw Treaty organisation.

The participants in the conference regard it as their duty to fight consistently for consolidation of the cohesion of the international Communist movement.

They point out that an important work has been accomplished recently for preparing another international conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties.

The fraternal Parties highly appreciate this work and express their conviction that the coming conference would be a success and would make an important contribution to the cause of consolidating all the revolutionary forces of our time.

We are fully confident that the uniform Marxist-Leninist world outlook, the role of the Communist and Workers' Parties as the vanguard and the leader of the society, the Socialist foundations of the national economy of our States would continue to serve as effective factors for further cohesion of the countries of Socialism, the unity of their actions in the struggle for their common lofty goals.

The Parties participating in the Bratislava conference make this statement being deeply convinced that the positions and views expressed therein are in line with the interests of all fraternal countries and Parties, the cause of the unbreakable friendship of the peoples of our countries, the interests of peace, democracy, national independence and Socialism.

III Statement on Czechoslovakia of the Political Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain

This statement was issued on July 26th, 1968

THE Communist Party of Great Britain welcomes the news of the forthcoming meeting between the leaderships of the Soviet and Czechoslovak Communist Parties. With mutual trust and confidence on each side it is possible for a solution of outstanding problems to be reached.

In the building of socialism new problems naturally arise, and new policies are therefore required to

deal with them. The correct handling of these problems by all concerned is essential, especially as imperialism is actively working all the time to attack socialism.

The utmost unity of Communist and Workers' Parties is vital, especially at a time when the united action of all left and progressive forces is needed in the struggle against imperialism and for peace,

and to secure the peaceful co-existence of states with different social systems, based on respect for the right of all peoples to national independence and social liberation.

Our Party has expressed its solidarity with the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and has welcomed the positive steps taken to tackle the wrongs of the past and strengthen socialist democracy.

We firmly believe that it was necessary to make these changes. They can facilitate the work of the Party, enhance its leading role, win it greater support among the people, and so help it to consolidate and defend the socialist basis of Czechoslovak society.

This is no easy task for the Czechoslovak Communist Party and the Czechoslovak people. The Czechoslovak Communist Party leadership has warned about the activities of the anti-socialist forces in its country and drawn attention to external dangers from hostile imperialism.

Other Communist Parties and socialist countries are also concerned about these dangers but only the Czechoslovak people and Communist Party can decide how to deal with their internal problems.

We believe that the interests of each socialist country and the unity and common security of them all against the dangers of imperialism must be based on voluntary and mutual co-operation, and with respect for national sovereignty and the autonomy of each Party, and acceptance of the principles of non-interference by Parties in the internal affairs of one another.

Respect for the autonomy of each Communist Party is the firm basis on which to build working class internationalism and relations of fraternal co-operation, which common class interests and common tasks in the struggle for peace and against imperialism require.

We believe that support for the Czechoslovak Communist Party in the positive steps it has taken will assist the growth of its prestige, and so help it to surmount the problems that have arisen in the course of strengthening socialist democracy.

An alert and dynamic socialist democracy is essential for the defence of socialism, and the extent to which the Communist Party assists the growth of such a democracy will strengthen its influence and therefore its leading role.

The Soviet Union and its Communist Party struck a crucial blow for socialism by opening the first breach in the world capitalist system, and constructing the first socialist state. It was their armies and their sacrifices above all which played the major part in smashing fascism and so opened the way to the emergence of the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. The role of the Soviet Union

has made it possible for the formerly oppressed peoples to win their emancipation and defend their independence. It has been the strength and the correct foreign policy of the Soviet Union which has helped to safeguard world peace and prevent a nuclear disaster.

Experience of the past fifty years, and especially since the second world war, shows, as Lenin foresaw, that although all socialist countries will have certain basic features in common, the paths to socialism and the particular forms and institutions of socialism will vary from country to country. These differences arise from differing historical circumstances in the world, and within each country, at the time of establishing working class power and building the new society. They are influenced by the particular traditions of each country, the specific characteristics of its class structure, the democratic forms which have existed previously, its culture and so on. The very path to power, whether through short or prolonged armed conflict, or whether by other forms of struggle, also leaves its imprint on the character and forms of socialist democracy which then arise.

Our Communist Party conducts its work on the basis of a programme which defines a British Road to Socialism. This road envisages the construction of a socialist democracy through an alliance of the Communist Party with all socialist and democratic forces in Britain, and with the existence of a plurality of parties. This form of socialist society which we advocate for Britain, will be based on all that is best in our historical traditions and institutions. It is a road which will make possible the creation of a society which ends the exploitation of man by man, breaks the political and economic power of the big monopolies, and abolishes poverty and inequality of opportunity. This will open up the possibilities of creating a new kind of democracy for Britain, not as at present where the democratic rights and institutions won by the people by centuries of struggle are daily curbed and flouted by the power of wealth, but a democracy in which the working people will have effective power and control over their lives—at their work, in their homes, in their political activity and in their leisure.

This path of advance which we put forward for Britain is based on the particular circumstances of our country. At the same time we are only too aware that such perspective does not arise solely from conditions in Britain but is influenced by general world developments, on the weakening of the power of the big monopolies which dominate the non-socialist world and on preventing a nuclear world war.

We consistently act in association with all other

Communist and Workers' Parties and in solidarity with all the forces struggling for peace, independence, democracy and socialism.

No real friend of Czechoslovakia will be misled by those ruling class circles in Britain which are now claiming to be Czechoslovakia's firmest supporters. Many of these pretended friends of Czechoslovakia openly supported her betrayal in 1938, when only the Soviet Union, whom they now berate, was ready to stand by Czechoslovakia and oppose the Nazis.

These so-called friends are backing West German imperialism, which is not only a menace to the

socialist countries but to all peoples in Europe and to the peace of the world. They are also backing American imperialism in its shameful war against Vietnam.

The imperialists are not concerned with Czechoslovak sovereignty, nor with the defence of socialist democracy. What they are after is the restoration of capitalism.

The Czechoslovak Communist Party and the working people are capable of giving a resolute rebuff to the anti-socialist forces, and, together with their socialist allies, to all hostile moves by imperialism.

IV Second Statement of the Political Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain

The following communiqué was issued by the Political Committee of the CPGB on August 8th, 1968.

THE Communist Party welcomes the results of the bi-lateral talks between the CPSU and the Czechoslovak Communist Party, and the Bratislava meeting, which are of great importance for the international Communist movement and the future of socialism.

They have confirmed the hope that given mutual trust, confidence and understanding, it is possible to find an agreed basis for dealing with outstanding problems.

The participants declared they will do all in their power to deepen all-round co-operation on the basis of the principles of equality, respect for sovereignty and national independence, territorial integrity and fraternal mutual assistance and solidarity.

The meetings have reinforced socialist unity, vital for the defence of peace, against US and West German imperialism, and laid the basis for the further development of the socialist economy and socialist democracy.

The Bratislava meeting made clear that while the struggle for socialism and its consolidation in each country is based on well-defined universal principles, there are variations because of specific national features and conditions.

The Czechoslovak Communists, in welcoming the results of the Bratislava meeting, have said that they will continue their policy of extending socialist democracy and developing their socialist economy. The British Communist Party expresses its solidarity with them in all positive steps taken to tackle the problems of developing and defending socialism in Czechoslovakia.

The fact that each Party has the responsibility for building socialism within its own country in no way contradicts, but in fact emphasises, the need for international socialist solidarity against the common enemy, imperialism. The Bratislava meeting, therefore, reaffirmed the unity of the participants on the essential issues of foreign policy for the defence of peace and security against US and West German imperialism. In doing so it served the cause of peace and socialism everywhere.

We British Communists will do all in our power to strengthen the fight for peace, to defeat the US aggression in Vietnam and for European security. We will work further to develop the unity of all Communist, Socialist and left forces, not only on immediate issues, but in the democratic struggle to win socialism along the lines of *The British Road to Socialism*.

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